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RESPONSE TO A DREAM

A Theological Evaluation of Operation Breakthrough

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Department of Theological Studies for the degree of Master of Theology In The Divinity School of Duke University

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PREFACE

This evaluation of a local community's anti-poverty program from the perspective of a student of Christian Theology is the result of a study made while a U. S. Navy postgraduate student at The Divinity School of Duke University during the 1965-1966 school year. The study was conducted under the profound and inspiring guidance of Dr. Frederick Herzog, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, and my major professor in the fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Theology. Dr. Creighton Lacy, Professor of World Christianity, served as my minor professor, and Dr. McMurry S. Richey, Professor of Theology and Christian Nurture, was the Director of the Master of Theology Program.

It is hoped that this thesis might prove helpful in an appraisal by ministers and lay churchmen of the national, state and local expressions of the current "war on poverty" in the United States and in their decisions as to the relevance of such efforts to the task of Christian missions. There is the further hope that some of the administrators and field personnel of local anti-poverty programs might be enabled to discern both new insights into the philosophical and operational principles of their programs and a potentially greater ally in the church, its members, and its theological enterprise.

The study was conducted through formal interviews, field visits and research; but, more importantly, through unannounced observation of people, places, and things related to this pioneer anti-poverty effort. Innumerable hours were spent in watching the various aspects of the program and in conversation with all sorts and dispositions of people about it. Without the diversity of experience gained as a civilian pastor for eleven years, as a businessman with a variety of interests, and as a reserve and active duty Navy Chaplain for the past eight years, the benefits of these informal efforts would have been greatly diminished.

My special appreciation is extended to Mr. Gerald L. Underwood, Associate Director of Operation Breakthrough, whose introductory letter and understanding of my purposes were most helpful; to Mr. Wilson Morgan, Director of Public Information, who provided a wealth of printed matter for study, and who spent many hours in critical review and intensive discussion of my discernments; to Mrs. Cecil S. Johnson, Assistant Director of Public Information, who assumed Mr. Morgan's responsibilities upon his recent departure, and who has been extremely kind and helpful; and, not least, to the United States Navy and its Chaplains Corps for the selection for postgraduate study which made this year at Duke and this project possible.

I would be less than just if I did not also express my loving appreciation to my wife for her patient labors as a "sounding board," critic and proofreader; and to my children who, except for the vague knowledge of my presence in the area,

would have been forced to assume that "Daddy" had gone back to sea.

Warren Newman

Duke University
Durham, North Carolina
May, 1966

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RESPONSE TO A DREAM

A Theological Evaluation of Operation Breakthrough

Chapter I

THE NIGHTMARE OF POVERTY

"...you always have the poor with you..." - Matthew 26:11
"...the poverty of the poor is their ruin" - Proverbs 10:15[1]

The Structure of a Bad Dream

Real poverty is a nightmare! For most Americans it is very much like the occasional bad dream that startles a person awake in fear and uncertainty. The experience can be prompted by an encounter with a beggar, by the sight of ragged, hollow-eyed children roaming a street, or by an unusual act of violence that flares up in the slums. But the disturbing dream is usually soon forgotten amid more pleasant daily activities. For millions in this prosperous land, however, poverty is a constant and seemingly inescapable daytime nightmare. The fear and uncertainty, as well as the hunger and disease, the filth and ignorance, the violence and bitterness are always with them.

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1. All biblical quotations in the study are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

Although readily observable by anyone who becomes sufficiently concerned, poverty is extremely difficult to analyze objectively and unemotionally. Most people, for example, have fairly specific opinions as to the causes of poverty even though their acquaintance with its manifestations is fleeting and superficial. Such opinions can prejudice investigation so seriously as to invalidate its value. They range all the way from the feeling that people are poor only because of laziness and a preference for shabbiness and irresponsibility to the bitter conviction that the poor are the victims of a conscious and vicious conspiracy of exploitation on the part of the rich.

Further complicating the issue is the fact that poverty is a complex phenomenon. Few experts agree as to its characteristics and dimensions. Two families of the same size can have the same low income, but one can be self-sufficient and the other obviously impoverished and dependent upon society for sustenance. Two men can walk along the street of a busy city, especially in the United States, with similar external appearances, but one can be well nourished and independent while the other is agonizingly hungry, unemployed and desperate. It is hard to determine whether people are diseased and ignorant because they are poor, or if they are poor because they are diseased and ignorant.

A further complication is the fact that there is a communications barrier between the poverty-stricken and the self-sufficient. The poor are frequently secretive and evasive

toward even the best-intentioned investigator. As a consequence, accurate statistics and adequate definitions are exceedingly difficult to formulate, much less to interpret and evaluate. Thus, poverty is as strange and elusive as a terrifying dream, but almost anyone who has probed its reality with any significant degree of objectivity will contend that it is a far more realistic nightmare.

It is with a dramatic effort both to understand and to destroy the basic structure of this nightmare that this study is concerned. A single community's assault on poverty will be analyzed and then evaluated from the perspective of a student of Christian theology. Essential to this undertaking is the development of an historical resumé of the effort and its interaction with the growing national and state-level anti-poverty programs with which it has known a reciprocal relationship of influence. It is also necessary to establish as functional principles of this study some general characteristics of poverty which seem valid on the basis of the writer's study and personal observations.

The most prominent of these characteristics is the multidimensional nature of poverty. Inadequate income is merely one of its aspects. It is, to be sure, an aspect that is directly related to poor housing, insufficient food, limited education and poor health--all extremely serious matters. But the obvious nature of inadequate income and its consequences does not diminish its deceptiveness if it is regarded as the only measure of poverty. The simple elevation of monetary resources

will not extricate many thousands of people from what Michael Harrington called the "subculture of misery" in the United States.[1] There is also an important and complex psychological dimension to poverty. A prevailing pessimism, indifference and distrust which readily become brooding and resentful bitterness with a disdain for logical approaches to difficult problems form a cultural prison-house of far more serious proportions than does a lack of money. This combination of objective and subjective factors culminate in the condition under which people live out their lives.

Another significant characteristic of poverty is its cyclical nature. Throughout Harrington's The Other America the point is extensively and effectively developed that "the poor are caught in a vicious circle." As early as in 1944, Gunnar Myrdal had used precisely the same terminology in speaking of "the vicious circle" wherein "poverty itself breeds the conditions which perpetuate poverty."[2] One of Harrington's most incisive passages elaborates the matter incisively:

> Here is one of the most familiar forms of the vicious circle of poverty. The poor get sick more than anyone else in the society. That is because they live in slums, jammed together under unhygienic conditions; they have inadequate diets, and cannot get decent medical care. When they become sick,

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1. Michael Harrington, The Other America (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), p. 19.

2. Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma (2 vols.; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), I, 208.

> they are sick longer than any other group in the society. Because they are sick more often and longer than anyone else, they lose wages and work, and find it difficult to hold a steady job. And because of this, they cannot pay for good housing, for a nutritious diet, for doctors. At any given point in the circle, particularly when there is a major illness, their prospect is to move to an even lower level and to begin the cycle, round and round, toward even more suffering.1

The administrators of Operation Breakthrough, the community anti-poverty program which is the subject of this study, and the founders and staff of its parent organization--the North Carolina Fund--speak frequently of the "cycle of poverty." The term seems to have been chosen out of a desire to point up the way in which similar patterns of economic and cultural disadvantage are passed on from one generation to the next in a fashion akin to the circularity of poverty experienced by individuals and groups.

Each of these modes of expression is helpful in visualizing the fact that "poverty breeds poverty." There is a distinctive tendency for the poverty-stricken to know increasingly lower levels of poverty and for impoverished adults to have children who will also live amid the nightmare. Almost invariably, some form of external assistance is necessary before an individual or family can break the bondage of the multiplicity of factors that keep them moving along the circles and cycles that constitute the subculture of poverty. They

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1. Harrington, p. 22.

must be assisted at least to the point at which there is the realistic possibility of helping themselves.

These characteristics, when fully appreciated, dramatically broaden the usual mental image of the poor and make possible a functional definition of poverty. Poverty will be defined for our purposes, then, as the life-condition of people with insufficient financial, or monetary-equivalent, resources resulting in, and from, inadequate nutrition, clothing, housing, education, physical and psychological vitality for effective and independent adjustment to a society.

National Dimensions

The number of persons and family units who fall within the rather fluid boundaries established by this definition is difficult to determine. As has been indicated, solely objective criteria cannot comprise accurate standards for the determination of impoverishment. Even if they are merely helpful to our awareness of the problem, the experts disagree substantially as to the levels at which such standards should be established.

A study by Robert Lampman established a low-income line for an urban family of four at $2,500 annually and concluded that 19 per cent of the American population, 32,000,000 people, had decidedly substandard income.[1] An AFL-CIO study in 1958

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1. Harrington, p. 176.

[illegible] to [illegible] to the [illegible] work. There is the [illegible] availability of [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [

set a higher figure of $3,000, indicating that 24 per cent of the population, 41,500,000 people, have inadequate income.[1] Using a more recent survey by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics for comparison, Michael Harrington surmises that some 50,000,000 people fall below a low-income line of about $3,500 per family.[2] His own conclusion is that somewhere between 20 and 25 per cent of the American people are so poor as to have inadequate housing, medicine, food and opportunity; they number between 40,000,000 and 50,000,000 persons, depending on the standard of low income that is utilized.[3]

By April of 1962, the Conference on Economic Progress had completed a detailed statistical analysis of poverty in the United States. Families with annual incomes under $4,000 were considered to be living under conditions of poverty, as were unattached individuals with incomes of less than $2,000. Using these standards the Conference presumes some 38,000,000 Americans, more than one-fifth of the nation, to have been impoverished in the year 1960.[4] A second category--deprivation--was also utilized and defined as "above poverty but short of

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1. Harrington, p. 176.

2. Ibid., p. 177.

3. Ibid., pp. 178, 185.

4. Poverty and Deprivation in the United States: The Plight of Two-Fifths of a Nation (Washington Conference on Economic Progress, April, 1962), as reported in Michael Brooks, The Dimensions of Poverty in North Carolina (Durham, N. C.: The North Carolina Fund, June, 1964), p. 3.

minimum requirements for a modestly comfortable level of living...." The income range for this group was set at $4,000 to $5,999 for families, and $2,000 to $2,999 for unattached persons. This would entail some 39,000,000 people living under conditions of deprivation. A combination of the two categories led the Conference to the conclusion that over 77,000,000 Americans, or more than two-fifths of the nation, lived in poverty or deprivation in 1960.[1]

These widely-divergent estimates of the scope of poverty in our country illustrate the difficulties of both concise definition and statistical analysis of this complex problem. But none of them offers solace to those to those who feel no need of concern, nor any justification for complacency in anti-poverty efforts.

Michael Harrington further clarifies the national dimensions of poverty by indicating that about one-fourth of the poor are non-white; that non-white minorities suffer from the most intense and concentrated impoverishment of any other group; that other particularly disadvantaged groups are the aged, the migrant workers, children, the industrial rejects, families headed by women and the uneducated. He points out that the poor suffer more from medical and dental disorders than other groups within the total population, and from a higher

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1. Poverty and Deprivation in the United States: The Plight of Two-Fifths of a Nation, as reported in Brooks, p. 3.

percentage of mental and emotional problems.[1]

It is often emphasized that poverty in America is not really comparable with the destitution known by the poor of other nations. Although this does not diminish the severity of the problem within our nation, it is certainly true. The most hopeful dreams of those who think in terms of the conquest of poverty on an international scale call for an annual per capita income of about $200 by the year 2000.[2] Poverty is a relative condition which, especially because of its psychological dimensions, must always be evaluated in terms of the living standards of the society, or the segment of a society, in question.

State and Local Dimensions

The State of North Carolina and, in particular, the section known as Durham County provide the specific locale for the effort to combat poverty which is the subject of this study. The income levels established to provide a rough estimation of the incidence of poverty on a state-wide and local scale must necessarily reflect those circumstances of livelihood which are adjudged to differ from those of the nation at large. Based on the tendency of southern states to have a

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1. Harrington, pp. 185-186.

2. Edward Rogers, Poverty on a Small Planet (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965), pp. 71-76.

lower general cost of living and on the predominantly rural nature of the state, a study by the North Carolina Fund, whose development will shortly be traced, uses the figure of $3,000 as an appropriate annual family income figure below which the characteristics of "hard core" poverty can be found.[1]

Of the state's 1,091,656 families, 405,579--about 37 per cent--fall below this minimal figure. With a very few exceptions, much higher percentages of low income families are found in the mountainous western extreme of the state and in the Coastal Plains of its eastern half, while the highest median family incomes are found in the more urbanized and industrialized Piedmont, or central, section of the state.[2] Extremes are represented by sparsely-populated Tyrrell County with 71.8 per cent of its families having less than $3,000 income, and by populous Edgecombe County with only 20.1 per cent of such families. Both race and place of residence clearly affect income in North Carolina. In 1960 urban whites had a median income of $5,565, while urban non-whites made $2,599; rural non-farm whites made $4,310 while rural non-farm non-whites had a median family income of $1,817; for the rural farm population comparable figures were $2,796 and $1,213.[3]

Durham County, located in the Piedmont section, is an urban area largely supported by the tobacco and textile indus-

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1. Brooks, p. 4.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 59.

tries. Its early prosperity from the growth of the tobacco industry enabled the establishment of hospitals, public facilities and Duke University, but its recent economic development has begun to lag behind other areas in the state. Seasonal unemployment and labor surplus are problems.

Typical of Durham County's average and above-average statistical position in North Carolina is the fact that its 1959 median family income was $4,876, ranking it as the seventh most prosperous of the state's 100 counties, and well above the overall median income of $3,956. Still, 6,966 of the county's 27,180 families had below the $3,000 income standard that year.[1] This means that 25.6 per cent, about one family out of four, experienced serious poverty, and among non-white families this percentage was more than doubled. Fifty-three per cent of the county's Negro families had less than $3,000 income. In certain census tracts of the area the median family income for all families (white and non-white) was less than this figure.[2]

In an analysis of some of the general conditions of education, employment, health and general welfare this county followed its average to above-average statistical pattern. It showed a slightly higher median number of school years com-

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1. Brooks, pp. 6-7.

2. Operation Breakthrough, "A Proposal Submitted to The North Carolina Fund by the Committee on Action for Durham Development," January, 1964.

pleted (9.8) by persons aged 25 and older than did the entire state (8.9), but both were lower than the national figure of 10.6 median years of schooling completed. Durham County's illiteracy rate of 15 per cent was lower than North Carolina's 16.5 per cent of adults with less than five years schooling.[1] Although lower than the state's 25.7 per cent, the county had a startling 21.4 per cent of its 16 and 17 year olds not enrolled in school in 1960.[2]

On the negative side of Durham County's average to higher-than-average standing in North Carolina in these areas of interest were the following characteristics: a higher percentage of its labor force (6.3) was unemployed than in the state at large (5.9) in March, 1962.[3] Its incidence of tuberculosis was slightly higher (3.93 cases per 10,000 population as compared to 3.14 cases), and its incidence of 120.99 cases of venereal disease per 10,000 population was the highest of any county in the state, which had an average rate of 27.51 cases per 10,000 persons in 1961.[4] The county had 490.4 cases of juvenile delinquency per 10,000 population in 1960 in contrast to North Carolina's average of 161.4 cases, but its percentage of illegitimate births (8.9 per 100 live births) was

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1. Brooks, pp. 11-13.
2. Ibid., pp. 18-19.
3. Ibid., pp. 22-23.
4. Ibid., pp. 32-33.

a bit better than the state's 9.3 illegitimate births per 100.[1]

Any generalized conclusions based on these relative and less than exhaustive statistics are apt to be misleading and even unsupportable. The mere existence of unfavorable levels of education, employment, health and crime does not establish a causal relationship with inadequate levels of income. The most that can be said is that the two phenomenological areas are frequently associated. Sometimes these figures indicate little more than an environmental characteristic. The staggering incidence of venereal disease would seem to be in contradiction to its above-average economic status within the state, but the significance of the statistic is found largely in the higher population density and urban nature of the area. Such an "anti-social" phenomenon simply has greater opportunity for its contagious expression there than in sparsely-populated and rural environs.

But the statistics help provide a mental conceptualization of the extent of state and local poverty in the area of our concern, and they are at least indicative of some illuminating assumptions. It can be assumed, for example, that the problem of poverty in North Carolina and Durham County is adequately substantial to serve as a valid "testing ground" for the efficacy of experimental anti-poverty efforts. It can be

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1. Brooks, pp. 50-51.

further assumed that the social conditions most frequently associated with impoverishment are sufficiently present in these areas to be periodically investigated and competently evaluated. Another seemingly valid assumption growing out of these statistics is that the state and locality have enough contrasting financial and social characteristics among their population to provide the resources and technical skills essential to the operation of a meaningful anti-poverty program. The success or failure of such a program in such an area might legitimately be assumed to furnish a provocative study and potential challenge to other localities confronting the issue of poverty and seeking pertinent informational and experiential guidance.

The subtle danger of even such a fleeting statistical survey as this is that the individual and collective tragedy, the stark horror and sickening helplessness known by the very poor of our nation might be obscured by impersonal mathematical calculations. In that case the figures would have done us a great disservice. Far more important than statistical precision is the fact that there is a needless and shameful subculture of poverty throughout this wealthy land. For those who dwell within it poverty is never a statistic--it is a hungry, cold, dirty, terrible nightmare that constantly hovers like an awesome and grotesque spectre all around them.

The Dream Net

How is it that this persistent daytime nightmare of millions of Americans is only a fleeting bad dream for most of the rest of us? How do we manage to pay so little attention to, and do so little about, the misery of one-fourth of our fellow countrymen?

Perhaps there is an interesting and illuminating simile to be found in a custom of the Chippewa Indians in days long past. Sigurd F. Olson, famous woodsman and naturalist, relates how Chippewa mothers constructed little nets of fine thread strung tightly on small wooden hoops to be hung over the spot where their babies slept in the teepee. The superstition was that bad dreams as well as good were always in the air around sleeping children. The Indian mothers wanted their babies to sleep in peace, so the nets were designed with a tiny hole in the center for the good dreams to come through, but the bad ones, not knowing the way, became tangled in the mesh and died when struck by the morning light.[1]

There is a sense in which modern Americans have made intangible dream nets for themselves. We don't want to think about dirty, hungry, ignorant people, so we have carefully constructed psychological nets designed to keep out the night-

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1. Sigurd F. Olson, Runes of the North (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), pp. 9-10.

mares while allowing more pleasant dreams to slip through into our consciousness.

We have drawn tightly the threads of social distance and geographical separation. The poor are huddled together "across the tracks"; for the most part they trade at their own stores, go to their own churches and associate, we presume, with their "own kind." Except for certain circumstantial encounters, we know them only in their roles as household servants, day laborers, yard men and low-strata municipal employees. Knowledge of their real condition is tangled safely in a protective mesh that allows us to occupy ourselves with the far more pleasant dreams of increasing security, business and professional achievement, and social prestige.

There are other strands in our dream nets that help keep the ugliness of poverty at a distance. One is the widespread feeling that people choose to be poor as a consequence of laziness or ignorance or immorality and that nothing very effective can be done to change them. Another strand is the general notion that a great deal is being done for the poor; we see increasing numbers of low-cost housing projects and the demolition of slum areas and figure that progress is being made as rapidly as the economy will allow. Yet another strand is the conviction that the poor are really not so bad off--that they lead simple, relatively happy lives outside the tense complexities that accompany greater responsibility.

Some of the threads in our dream nets are woven there without our knowledge; others we select carefully as an act of

protective self-love. We construct with varying degrees of skill; some people build so poorly that the nightmare disturbs them all too frequently. But for the most part they work unusually well. Our habitual insensitivity and indifference toward the wretchedness and squalor of the lives of so many all about us testify to their effectiveness.

Chapter II

A DREAM OF HOPE

"...they would have us remember the poor..." - Galatians 2:10
"He who closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself cry out..." - Proverbs 21:13

Men with Poor Nets

A poorly-constructed dream net is a troublesome liability; it allows the nightmares of our existence to seep through into the consciousness and become a distressing irritant amid the pursuit of security and pleasure. But people with poor nets are our salvation in many areas of life. In the realm of poverty some of them have made it possible to counteract the nightmare with a dream of hope.

President John F. Kennedy was such a man. Even with his highly-privileged personal background, he was deeply concerned for the welfare and advancement of the economically and culturally disadvantaged in the United States. He had requested a copy of Michael Harrington's newly-published The Other America through Walter Heller, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. The non-technical report on poverty impressed the President and evidently helped to determine his

positive reaction to Heller's recommendation that a "war" on poverty be declared. He had initiated activities toward its inauguration shortly prior to his death.

Both Kennedy's attitude toward the effort and a knowledge of the same book doubtlessly contributed to President Johnson's intense concern for effective national anti-poverty measures. He devoted a large measure of his initial State of the Union message to the subject and called for the war on poverty, which his predecessor had envisioned, in these words:

> It will not be a short or easy struggle--no single weapon or strategy will suffice--but we shall not rest until that war is won.
>
> The richest nation on earth can afford to win it.
>
> We cannot afford to lose it.
>
> $1,000 invested in salvaging an unemployable youth today can return $40,000 or more in his lifetime.
>
> Poverty is a national problem, requiring improved national organization and support. But this attack, to be effective, must also be organized at the state and local level and supported by state and local efforts.[1]

During this same period of time the Governor of the State of North Carolina was a man named Terry Sanford. Governor Sanford had directed his administration in a concerted effort to improve his state's educational system and to bring to it a more advanced level of economic and cultural development. But, throughout his efforts, frustrating obstacles created by the presence of poverty and its detrimental social

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1. Operation Breakthrough, p. II-3.

consequences kept reappearing. These obstacles had confronted many another public official, but they met in Governor Sanford a strong suspicion that traditionally-accepted techniques for surmounting them were not only inadequate but invalid. This suspicion led to a series of activities which will be examined later in this chapter.

There were, of course, many men of position and influence with similar concerns to those of Kennedy, Johnson, Sanford and their advisers, and with a similar incapacity to be indifferent to the ravages of poverty, but these three are of particular relevance to this study and must, the writer feels, be considered as being more directly instrumental in giving substance to the hopeful dream of poverty's eradication. Behind them lay the lives of thousands of social workers, politicians, clergymen and others who had been concerned, with widely-varying degrees of involvement, for the poor and needy of the nation. They, too, were a part of the good dream.

The Growing Tumult

A substantial role must be accorded the so-called "Negro Revolution" in this country in making a larger proportion of the population more vividly aware of some of the social consequences of impoverishment. Suffering more intensely from poverty than other groups and experiencing its meaning in more highly concentrated areas, Negroes made their frustration and resentment apparent in their legal and civil disobedience

efforts to gain equality of opportunity.

The legal and legislative efforts were to culminate in such historic acts as the Supreme Court's school integration ruling, the Civil Rights Act, and the voting rights law. These gains encouraged civil rights organizations in their sponsorship of sit-in demonstrations, non-violent protests and marches, and of the pursuit of a broad range of civil goals.

But there were other facets of this growing tumult than court action and reasoned effort. While their end results have seemed to be more detrimental than helpful to the Negro cause, the eruption of racial violence in cities like Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Rochester and Philadelphia also had the effect of focusing the attention of the nation on the mood of desperation and anger in which minority groups sometimes approach their problems.

These efforts and incidents added a sense of urgency to political and private efforts to combat poverty. They were a violent and telling assault on the structure of the dream nets that had enabled so many of us to remain relatively unconcerned about the plight of the poor and the disadvantaged minorities.

The Prospect of Conflict

Nobody with any degree of realism expected an attack on poverty to meet with unopposed enthusiasm. The metaphoric use of the terminology of warfare was made all the more appro-

priate by the fact that poverty, powerful and tenacious in itself, has some sinister allies.

Prejudice is not the least of them. Both racial and class prejudice are bound to flare violently at any anti-poverty effort. An element in both is the conviction that the disadvantaged are that way because of willful laziness, ignorance and slovenliness. This widespread conviction has resulted in a contempt for the poor that frequently has coexisted with feelings of sympathy and compassion toward them. Prejudice has also caused rebellion against the thought of increased social proximity and a resentment against sharing the hard-won advantages of our economy and culture with supposedly inferior races, groups and individuals, and with those who are considered to have been uninvolved in their attainment.

Fear is another of poverty's allies. The propensity of the poor and disadvantaged toward violence has been viewed with genuine alarm as a threat to the well-being and security of the independent and privileged elements of our society. It is. But fear has often dictated a stubborn recalcitrance which only increases the probability of physical violence rather than the discernment of avenues of cooperative endeavor which might ultimately make apprehension of violence totally unrealistic. The structure of fear, of course, has other than physical dimensions and takes a wide variety of forms which breed antipathy toward any effort to alleviate the needs of the poor.

Men of vision were aware, along with President Johnson, that the battle would not be lightly won. Perhaps never before in our history had such a powerful complex of hostile forces been arrayed against those who were to lead this nation into a conflict.

Mapping the Strategy

The first tangible consequence of the concern of the official leadership of the State of North Carolina regarding its serious and obstructive problems of poverty emerged in 1963. Governor Terry Sanford had concluded that some constructive strategy for combatting the multi-faceted menace of economic and social disadvantage was essential to the fulfillment of the goals of his administration for the welfare of his state. He realized that the success of an improved school system, as well as the future industrial and cultural development of North Carolina, depended in a large measure on the effectiveness of such a strategy. He expressed his conviction this way:

> I have come to believe that charity and relief are not the best answers to human suffering, that the schools are not the answer so long as only a third or a half of our students finish school, that the wealth of America is not the answer if many families have fifty-some cents a day per person for all expenses; that it is not enough to have here the most powerful nation in the world and then to admit that we are powerless to find ways to give our young people training and job opportunities.[1]

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1. Early North Carolina Fund Progress Report, p. 2.

As a result of the investigative and contemplative efforts of his aide and idea-developer, novelist and former University of North Carolina faculty member, Mr. John Ehle, and their conversations on the matter, Governor Sanford decided that a "break-the-poverty-cycle" effort should be undertaken, not as a function of the state government, but as an experimental program financed by private sources. They decided to seek such financial assistance primarily from large philanthropic foundations which had been established for educational and civic advancement. Prior to any specific requests, however, they sought a measure of confirmation of their ideas and tentative solutions. Sanford, Ehle and Mr. Joel Fleishman went to New York to call on Henry Heald, president of the Ford Foundation. With Mr. Heald were Mr. Clarence Faust and Mr. Paul Yerrsaker. The request was made that the Ford Foundation send down a staff team to visit North Carolina and formulate an opinion as to a course of action.[1]

The team came and were flown all over the state for numerous conferences. Their resultant conclusions, merged with those of Governor Sanford and his associates, led to the presentation of a formal proposal and fund request to the Ford Foundation on August 12. In September of 1963, the Ford Foundation decided to place a grant of seven million dollars at their disposal. This amount was to grow by another two and one-half

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1. "Birth of the North Carolina Fund," Durham Morning Herald," February 14, 1966.

million dollars by grants from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation of $1,625,000, and the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation of $875,000.[1] Both of the latter foundations are headquartered in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

To receive and dispense these funds properly, Governor Sanford and a group of advisers had created a non-profit organization called the North Carolina Fund, Incorporated, and named a distinguished board of directors drawn from all areas of the state and a diversity of backgrounds. This group of business and professional leaders, educators and politicians were to serve under the Board Chairmanship of Sanford and the guidance of the Fund President, Mr. C. W. "Pete" McKnight, Editor of The Charlotte Observer. They chose as Executive Director of the Fund, Mr. George H. Esser, Jr., then assistant director of the Institute of Government and a University of North Carolina professor of law and government. Mr. Esser assembled a staff of six professionals in an austere suite of offices in Durham to lead the operational activities of the proposed comprehensive attack on poverty. Among their formal and experiential qualifications for the task were a Ph. D. in City Planning; experience as a teacher and editor; a Ph. D. in Public Health with ten years of public-health field work; community development experience with ten years of work with migrant workers in four states; experience as a Methodist minister involved in the or-

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1. North Carolina Fund Publicity Folder.

ganization of volunteer workers for anti-poverty efforts in North Carolina; and experience as a writer and photographer.[1]

Thus, by the early Fall of 1963, the concern of the leadership of a state for its poor, coupled with the trust of philanthropic foundations, both undoubtedly influenced to some degree by the interest of federal leaders and the growing assertiveness of minorities for whom poverty is an incessant daytime nightmare, had become a skeletal organization with a mission. A competently-staffed "Combat Information Center" had been established in the tobacco and textile industries center of Durham. A dream of hope had become tangible reality.

Autumn in North Carolina is a beautiful season of blazing color, exhilarating weather and subdued, but exciting, sounds. The trees are a carnival of red and golden hues; the brilliant sun cuts through clear, crisp air; the birds and squirrels scurry about among the falling leaves as they feed and gather for the winter. Even life-long residents sense a new joy in just being alive amid such a splendid expression of God's creation. But not too many of them knew that amid the familiar sights and sounds of the Autumn of 1963 something new and different was taking place--one of the initial campaigns of a war was being planned in their midst--the destruction of an ancient and vicious enemy was its goal. The success or failure of that war would profoundly affect their lives for many seasons to come.

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1. Early North Carolina Fund Progress Report, pp. 3-4.

Chapter III

THE RESPONSE

"...the needy shall not always be
forgotten, the hope of the poor
shall not perish forever"
- Psalm 9:18

Activity in North Carolina

The officials of the fledgling North Carolina Fund, with nine and one-half million dollars to spend in an experimental campaign against poverty in their state, were convinced of something which had yet to be proven. It was the notion that an individual community, when properly motivated, is better able to understand the unique circumstances of its own disadvantaged citizens than would be possible for any extraneous organization, study or agent. This conviction led to the operational premise of an overall break-the-poverty-cycle effort coordinated with locally-developed and intrinsically-administered programs of action within individual communities. This was a fairly unprecedented premise in contrast with the customary procedure of designing a master program to deal with a stipulated complex of problems and then making arbitrary decisions as to when, where and how money would be spent in

efforts directed toward their alleviation. As it developed, this highly-tentative premise was to help form the basis for a gradually-developing and nationwide "War on Poverty."

The community-action concept became operational in the Fall of 1963 when the North Carolina Fund invited the leaders of every county in the state to join together in study of the problems of poverty as they were locally constituted and then submit a proposal for attacking those problems. In North Carolina, the county is the basic unit for the administration of health, education, and welfare programs. Counties were, therefore, established as a minimum-size community unit for the submission of a proposal, with sparsely-populated areas being encouraged to form multi-county action units.

The Fund said that a successful proposal must:

> Reflect community-wide understanding of problems faced by families living in poverty.
> Review existing programs dealing with those problems.
> Define the newly-proposed program's short and long-range goals.
> Include several ideas for experimental programs promising to attack the root causes of poverty, thus making people more self-reliant and better able to assume productive roles in the community.
> Describe how community agencies, governmental units, and other local forces would work together to administer the project.
> Submit a plan for continuing the program once the North Carolina Fund's resources are exhausted.
> Name one to four small areas within the community as target sites for experimental action.[1]

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1. North Carolina Fund Publicity Folder.

The response to this invitation, which obviously involved so much concentrated effort and perceptive activity, amazed the officials of the North Carolina Fund. They had expected perhaps 20 to 30 counties to have sufficiently-concerned leadership to submit a comprehensive proposal. But shortly after the beginning of 1964, proposals started pouring into the Fund's Durham offices. Some were large, illustrated and impressive; others consisted only of a few pages of mimeographed material stapled together, but all represented a significant degree of interest, thoughtful analysis, and a spirit of active concern for the poor of their communities. By the February 1 cutoff date, 51 proposals, representing the participation of 66 of the state's 100 counties, had been received. This gratifying response immediately posed a formidable task of screening and selection, since all of the proposals could not be given even limited financial support with available funds.

Fund Director Esser, after consultation with his Board of Directors and the members of his staff, decided that each of the 51 communities should be visited by representatives of the Fund. These visits could serve the two-fold purpose of gaining personal insight into the situations represented by the proposals and of encouraging the communities in their plans for solving problems of poverty. Teams consisting of two board members and two staff members covered North Carolina on a rigorous schedule until the last "on-site" visit was completed in mid-March. The Fund's staff was then able to begin its

task of analysis and comparison of both observations and proposals. Their goal was the selection of the best of the experimental community-action programs while achieving good geographical distribution and a balance between large and small cities as well as rural and industrial areas.

In mid-April the Fund's board of directors met in Asheville to act on the staff evaluations, visit observations and the original proposals. Governor Sanford announced the results of the exhaustive study at a press conference on April 20, and his preliminary statement culminated in the selection of eleven communities, involving 20 counties, for initial financial and advisory sponsorship. The eleven were:[1]

Urban-Rural Communities

1. Nash and Edgecombe Counties
2. Craven County
3. Richmond, Robeson, and Scotland Counties
4. Rowan County

Rural Communities

5. Wautauga, Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey Counties
6. Macon County
7. Bertie, Halifax, Northampton, and Hertford Counties

Urban Communities

8. Forsyth County
9. Mecklenburg County
10. Durham County
11. Buncombe County

The geographical distribution achieved is represented in Figure 1.

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1. North Carolina Fund Publicity Folder.

Figure 1. Communities in North Carolina originally receiving grants and supportive services from the North Carolina Fund.

Fund Executive Director, George Esser, sought to encourage the communities whose proposals were not accepted to build upon the momentum created by proposal activity by asserting that other lesser grants would be made by the Fund, that aid from North Carolina's state agencies should become available, and by indicating the high probability of the passage of President Johnson's Economic Opportunity Act in 1964--its Title II would set aside over $300 million for grants to communities submitting comprehensive community-action proposals

dealing with problems of poverty and lack of opportunity.[1] It was pointed out by Mr. Esser that the language of Title II of the Act was indicative of its acknowledged obligation to the pioneering efforts of his state's leaders and to the unique basic operational premise of the North Carolina Fund.

To the eleven fortunate communities, grants would be made in stages which would have the effect of giving them a head start toward participation in the proposed national "War on Poverty." The stages were planned as follows: a small initial grant for early organizational and administrative costs; a four-year grant for organizational expenses only after specific local program plans and budgets had been adopted; and, finally, grants to finance those portions of the community work programs for which no other private, local, state or federal funds are available. The organizers and administrators of the Fund have continually referred to their original Foundational grants as "seed money" which would help the state's communities "to take advantage of all the resources available, inside and out of the state, to help our people help themselves."[2]

It should also be noted that the North Carolina Fund supports several other programs which are coordinated with the activities of the anti-poverty organizations it sponsors. A

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1. Early North Carolina Fund Progress Report, p. 9.
2. Ibid., p. 11.

Comprehensive School Improvement Program administered by the State Board of Education matched $2 million from the Fund with $2 million in state funds in an experiment to develop better ways of teaching basic educational skills in the primary grades. The North Carolina Volunteers, a Peace-Corps-style organization, trained one hundred college students during the summer of 1964 for work in the state's community-action programs. As a result of its experience in this area the North Carolina Fund was selected to plan and conduct six-week training programs for the first VISTAs (Volunteers In Service to America) serving in the nation's war on poverty.[1] The Fund also develops publicity materials for national VISTA recruiting. An enlarged program trained two hundred and fifty North Carolina Volunteers and sent them as twenty-one teams into seventeen North Carolina communities to assist in the poverty programs during the summer of 1965. Community Action Technicians is a program for recruiting and training persons sensitive to social problems for service in community-action programs.

The Fund also shares the sponsorship of the Learning Institute of North Carolina, a research and program development agency in the field of education. Community Services Consultants, professionals in community development are trained

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1. "Blueprint for Opportunity," Vol. I, No. 1; April, 1965, North Carolina Fund publication, Durham, North Carolina, p. 1.

by the North Carolina Fund, administered by the state's Department of Public Welfare, and assigned to communities that originally submitted proposals of community-action programs but were not selected for major Fund support.

These, and other programs of major significance, have given the North Carolina Fund a remarkable history and a determinative influence in federal programs designed to combat poverty and its causes. It has been prolific in its production of dynamic activity at local and state levels and consistently creative of ideas which have been adopted by other agencies. A unique proposal, for example, for combatting rural unemployment problems was recently funded by a federal grant from the Office of Manpower, Automation and Training for $1.1 million.[1] The North Carolina Fund's proposed five-year lifespan will, doubtless, initiate impulses that will throb in the socio-political-economic body of our nation for decades to come.

Activity in Washington

The hopes expressed early in 1964 by officials of the North Carolina Fund for federal legislation supporting community-action programs for combatting poverty were not long in being fulfilled. President Johnson had outlined his plans to Congress on March 16, and in August the Economic Opportunity

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1. North Carolina Fund Publicity Folder.

Act was funded by the Congress, providing money and technical assistance to communities that would take the initiative to analyze their local dimensions of poverty and develop proposals to attack its causes. The initial appropriation was $793 million to carry the program to 30 June 1965. The appropriation for the 1966 fiscal year (ending 30 June 1966) is $1.5 billion.[1] State coordinators and their staffs are available for advice and technical assistance at any point in the processes of organization essential to the development of acceptable proposals. The Act allows a maximum of flexibility to the communities, operating on the premise inspired by the North Carolina Fund that local leaders know their problems best and that their solutions depend on the knowledge and involvement of the people themselves, including the poor.

The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), which administers the Act, pays up to 90 per cent of the cost of local programs from federal funds and the community pays 10 per cent. If the community cannot pay even 10 per cent, then OEO can pay the full cost of the program. By 1967, OEO and the communities are supposed to split the poverty war costs fifty-fifty. It should be noted that the community's share of this financial burden is easily misinterpreted since it is most frequently paid "in kind." This means, quite simply, that the services

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1. Associated Press release by Bem Price, Durham Morning Herald, November 28, 1965, p. 1 D.

of volunteers, utilization of contributed building and property spaces, etc., are assigned a monetary value which should reach 10 per cent of the total local budget. Thus, in most cases, the total amount of the money expended comes through the Office of Economic Opportunity from federal appropriation.

The programs resulting from the many titles and sections of this Act are increasingly well known to Americans. They include the following:[1]

A Job Corps, providing away-from-home centers where high school drop-outs--young men and women aged sixteen through twenty-one--will live and participate in a coordinated program of basic education, skill training and constructive work experience.

A Work-Training Program, providing full or part-time work experience and training for youths, sixteen to twenty-one, enabling them to remain in or return to school or increase their chances of getting a job. This program was later to be called by the Neighborhood Youth Corps title.

A Work-Study program, providing part-time employment for college students from low-income families.

Community Action Programs, providing financial support for locally planned and administered anti-poverty projects in urban and rural areas. This is the heart of the Act and mobilizes and uses all available resources and facilities of the

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1. "The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964," flier published by the offices of the Economic Opportunity Program, Raleigh, North Carolina.

community--federal, state, local, public and private, human and material--to provide services, facilities, assistance and other means to eliminate poverty. This is accomplished by developing employment opportunities, improving human performance, motivation, productivity, and providing better living conditions.

VISTA, a program enabling Americans of all ages and from all walks of life to give a year of service, working with the disadvantaged in all sections of the Nation.

An Adult Basic Education Program, helping communities, through state-level support, set up classes for people who cannot read and write.

Special Programs for Rural People, providing loans and technical aid to low-income families.

Assistance for Migrant Agricultural Workers and their Families, to help states, localities and individuals meet special needs in housing, sanitation, education and the day care of children.

An Employment and Investment Incentive Program, providing up to $25,000 for small businesses not eligible for other loan programs.

A Work-Experience Program, providing funds for projects to help unemployed fathers and other needy persons in work experience and job training.

As might well have been expected, so massive and hastily-developed a program has not been without its mistakes, inefficiency, red tape and contention. As an Associated Press writer said in a November 21, 1965, feature article, "The

initial attack (in the War on Poverty) by the Office of Economic Opportunity has been blunted by reality and the troops are now entering the trenches."[1] The high idealism of the above-cited programs was destined to encounter something less than well-oiled precision when it reached the stage of assembly into functional machinery. Without the engagement of, and occasional casualties inflicted by, an enemy there could hardly be a "war." Some of the casualties will probably prove serious ones in the months ahead, and there is always the sobering possibility that the anti-poverty war might be lost.

The Job Corps, at the present writing, seems to be having the most difficulty. It planned to enroll 40,000 school drop-outs during its first year for basic education and work training, but enrolled only 12,981 and had its own drop-out rate of thirteen per cent. The Job Corps has received some very bad (though often exaggerated) publicity which has led to a general and serious public skepticism regarding its validity. Much of the criticism fails to recognize that Job Corps recruits are problem children from problem homes to begin with, and that some trouble must be expected when they are gathered together in training centers. Still, 96 per cent of the girls returned after the Christmas holidays to their Charleston, West Virginia, center which had been publicized for its disciplinary problems. Many returned early by bus out of loneliness for the

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1. Associated Press release by Bem Price, Durham Morning Herald, November 21, 1965, p. 1 D.

only place they had ever known friends and orderly lives; others came back early out of fear that their place would be taken by other recruits.[1] To date (December, 1965), the corps has graduated 318 youths from its training camps and half of them have been employed, with others planning to return to school or enter the armed forces.[2]

VISTA is also lagging with an enrollment of 1,315 in training or involved in local programs. Estimates of the number originally anticipated range from 2,000 to 5,000 volunteers. Of the original selections 204 have dropped out--175 during training and 29 from actual projects.[3]

Project Head Start has shown tremendous promise with 561,000 children enrolled in contrast to plans for a mere 100,000 economically and culturally deprived children to be helped made ready for elementary school experiences. Criticism of the program has ranged all the way from protests of the unusually high hourly amounts paid to its teachers ($8.00 per hour; $9.20 per hour for supervisory teachers says one article)[4] to the charge by a Duke University assistant professor

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1. Between the Lines: The Wells Newsletter, Vol. XXV, No. 6, March 15, 1966, Newtown, Penna.

2. Associated Press release by Ben Price, Durham Morning Herald, November 21, 1965, p. 1 D.

3. Ibid.

4. Christian Economics, Vol. XVII, No. 21, November 16, 1962.

of psychology that Head Start children "do not show significant gains" now that they are in regular first grade classes.[1] The latter charge is based on a gross misconception of the purposes of the program as it sought to give hungry children a good meal, a sense of individual identity, and a knowledge of the nature of group activity. It is also inconsistent with other, and more careful, evaluations. Head Start children in Baltimore led others by 10 IQ points on picture vocabulary tests according to a professor of child psychiatry at Johns Hopkins; children at a Montessori school in Clovis, California, showed gains of between four and twelve months on mental-maturity tests during the course of the program.[2] These are very real gains and are substantiated by other reports from across the country.[3]

Another program surpassing initial expectations was the work of the Neighborhood Youth Corps which planned to involve 200,000 youngsters and completed its first year with 277,000 participants.[4]

The risk of grossly-premature and necessarily over-generalized evaluations of national level programs is enormously great and, in any case, well beyond the scope of this

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1. Durham Morning Herald, February 5, 1966, p. 1 B.

2. Newsweek, February 21, 1966, p. 87.

3. Ibid. See also Reader's Digest, Vol. 88, No. 528, April, 1966, pp. 156-163.

4. Associated Press release by Ben Price, Durham Morning Herald, November 21, 1965, p. 1 D.

study which is more specifically concerned with the implications, at all levels, of a single expression of the program rooted in the heart of the Economic Opportunity Act--Community Action. The Community Action Program has immeasurably increased the opportunity to combat the poverty-cycle on the part of those who had never been involved in any direct sense with the nightmare as well as those whose memories had already motivated them to respond to the hopeful dream of new freedom and self-reliance for the disadvantaged. The activities and potential of the North Carolina Fund, which had been a vital influence in determining the rationale of the Economic Opportunity Act, were at once broadened and heightened. Many of the community-action programs which the Fund inspired have already requested and received grants of funds from the Office of Economic Opportunity. One of these programs now comes into its central focus in this study.

The Birth of Breakthrough

The first formal reaction on the part of the community of Durham to the invitation extended by the officials of the North Carolina Fund to submit proposals for local anti-poverty programs came on a fateful day in history. The events of November 22, 1963, were to stun the nation and shock the world. President John F. Kennedy, riding in a motorcade through friendly and applauding crowds in Dallas, Texas, was to be struck down by an assassin's bullets. The strange and intri-

cate interrelatedness of human lives was given unforgettable and traumatic expression when the vigorous, dynamic, accomplished young man, who had achieved his nation's highest office was murdered by a psychotic malcontent whose only consistency was failure. Perhaps there is abiding significance in the fact that earlier in the day in Durham a group of civic, business and professional leaders had gathered to initiate what would become a visionary and important response to the dream of hope which the President had shared and cherished.

That they met at all was largely due to the efforts of a man who would later become the Executive Director of the organization created by their efforts. Mr. Robert L. Foust was serving in the same capacity with the Durham Community Planning Council and had been inspired and challenged by the opportunity to undertake a large-scale assault on the poverty cycle. Bob Foust knew something about the nightmare of poverty from first-hand experience. He had received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and a Master of Social Work degree from the University of North Carolina, and he had attended the School of Alcoholic Studies at Yale University. His professional career included work as an epidemiologist in Michigan with the U. S. Public Health Service, welfare caseworker in San Francisco, and associate director of the Community Welfare Council in Sacramento, California.[1]

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1. "Breakthrough," Vol. I, No. , June, 1965, Durham, North Carolina.

His efforts to motivate the development of an anti-poverty proposal culminated in the organization of the group of leaders which came to be known as the "Action for Durham Development Committee," often called simply, "ADD." As it gradually became more intimately acquainted with the national, state and local aspects of the problems of poverty, this committee determined not merely to respond to the challenge of constructing a counteractive program, but to do so with deep concern and real effectiveness. They were greatly assisted in their efforts by an agency advisory committee composed of the heads of the various health, education and welfare agencies, both public and voluntary, in the Durham Community. The collection of the basic data regarding the local dimensions of poverty took place through the work of this agency advisory committee.[1]

As efforts to prepare an incisive and effective community-action proposal developed, the ADD Committee was startled by the increasing realization that Durham's poverty problem was far from minimal. It was hard for many of them to believe that twenty-five per cent of the families living in Durham County had an annual income of less than $3,000, and fourteen per cent less than $2,000; that eighty-five per cent of the housing units in urban renewal areas were totally dilapidated; that major health defects among school children in

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965; Executive Director's Statement, p. 2.

certain impoverished areas ran as high as seventy-eight per cent;[1] that school drop-outs were such a major problem that one area congested with hundreds of families had never seen one of its own children graduate from high school![2] Obviously the large sums of money spent annually for unemployment and welfare programs had not really struck at the hard core of poverty in this community. New approaches were needed; larger local concern and involvement were absolutely indispensable.

Many days and nights of study and discussion went into the conceptualization of a program that could move aggressively toward a solution of the manifold problems which previous efforts had treated only superficially. Finally on January 31, 1964, the resultant thoughtful and provocative proposal was submitted for selection or rejection by the North Carolina Fund. The concern and committment of the Action for Durham Development Committee was rewarded by Governor Sanford's April announcement of Durham's inclusion in the eleven community proposals selected for financial and advisory sponsorship. The Committee had called its proposal "Operation Breakthrough"--the title was now to struggle to life as an organization and a program by the same name.

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965; Executive Director's Statement, p. 2.

2. Cited in an interview with the Assistant Coordinator of the Community-Action Program in Target Area "A," Operation Breakthrough, Durham, North Carolina.

The initial organizational tasks were attended to by the ADD Committee to insure the structural soundness and vitality of their offspring during its first few precarious months of existence. When the Economic Opportunity Act was passed in August, 1964, making federal funds available for waging the "War on Poverty" on a nation-wide basis, this group hastened to seek this new source of sustenance for local anti-poverty efforts. Essentially the same proposal was submitted to the newly-established Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington as the North Carolina Fund had endorsed. The infant became strong enough to crawl when Operation Breakthrough became one of the first community-action programs to receive a grant of financial assistance through OEO in December, 1964. It is to an examination of the anatomical structure of this growing "child of promise" that we now direct our attention.

Chapter IV

THE ANATOMY OF OPERATION BREAKTHROUGH

"And if your brother becomes poor,
and cannot maintain himself with
you; you shall maintain him."
- Levitious 25:35

A New Philosophy

Several distinctive differences from previous efforts to combat poverty are readily apparent in Durham's community-action program, but none more fundamental than its undergirding philosophical principles. They have been articulated in different terms and even with an understandable confusion of philosophical principles and operational procedures, but extensive reading, discussion and observation have shown three convictions to be most important and most consistently involved in the thinking of effective functionaries within the program. This set of value concepts are greatly determinative of both the organizational structure and the operational procedures of the program.

The foundation stone of these principles is a high regard for the worth and dignity of the individual. This noble-sounding assertion might easily have been acclaimed by Operation Breakthrough, as it had by countless programs of benevo-

lence, without any practical consequences. But in Operation Breakthrough it is a realistic and influential precept. Its most dramatic consequence is that there is no place in the program for the charitable giving of funds to the poor. This practice is here considered entirely apart from its repetitious failure and flagrant wastefulness in relation to the total problem of poverty. The refutation of the "handout" is predicated on its effect in the lives of the recipients of such funds. They are made to feel dependent and worthless as human beings with a growing conscious or unconscious feeling that they are merely the objects of the pity of others. This feeling has frequently been accompanied by an increasing sense of helplessness, frustration and resentful bitterness. Breakthrough respects and values people too much for that; its efforts to lift people to new freedom and self-reliance would have to depend on other measures.

In an early public relations publication, Dr. Everett H. Hopkins, Vice-President of Duke University, and first President of Operation Breakthrough, said:

> ...instead of being another "handout" program, it is precisely the opposite. It is designed deliberately to get people off "welfare," off the relief rolls, and "on their own." Its chief purpose is to help people to become self-reliant and self-sufficient.... It is the same kind of investment we now make in public education, but aimed specifically towards people who are now an economic burden on their respective communities.[1]

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1. "Breakthrough, Vol. I, No. 2, July, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, p. 1.

This is, therefore, a program designed primarily to provide opportunities for "self-help" because of its conviction that only in this way can individuals be treated as persons of dignity and worth, in and of themselves, rather than merely as means to some socially desirable end.

This principle, in order to be consistent with itself, involves the expectation that a significant majority of the poor will respond positively to new opportunities when they are provided--that they will be willing to organize in the pursuit of social objectives, to investigate and attempt to understand their own problems, and then to expend concerted effort in the attempted correction of the problems and circumstances that contribute to their poverty. There is, too, the ultimate expectation that "self-help" becomes self-sustaining.

Operation Breakthrough is not intended as a permanent organizational structure; there would be less and less need for the program as more and more people achieve self-realization and self-reliance. This is one reason for its emphasis on cooperation and coordination of goals and efforts with established community agencies and services. Ideally, they would continue to function with even greater effectiveness after Operation Breakthrough had completed the tasks which it was created to accomplish. This program envisions itself as a catalyst seeking to bring about a strengthening and extension of the full spectrum of welfare services in the community, but with a particular focus of concern on the severely economically and culturally disadvantaged and deprived during the tenure of its efforts.

Inherent in this high regard for the individual is a "concern for his total development: educational, cultural, physical, social, emotional, moral and ethical."[1] This aspect of the foundational philosophical principle has some striking consequences of its own. It requires a multiplicity of programs carefully coordinated into a broad range of attacks at every possible point along the self-perpetuating cycle of poverty. To pursue a now familiar analogy, this must be a total warfare--the enemy must be hit at every vulnerable point--repeated assaults on single concentration or fortifications, no matter how successful, will not avail--his supply lines must be strafed and bombed, his communications cut, his regrouping routes mined and ambushed, if the victimized and oppressed are to be set free for unrestricted development in all the various aspects of personality.

A closely related philosophical principle to this high regard for the worth and dignity of the individual is the conviction that a person is best understood and approached in his own behalf in the context of his family unit. The family, as the basic social unit and the most directly-determinative influence in the lives of individuals, provides the conditions most conducive to the perpetuation of poverty from one generation to the next; it must also provide the most direct opportunity to break that perpetuity. It is in the home that per-

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965; Executive Director's Statement, p. 2.

sonality is molded and shaped at a very early age. Individuals, especially children, benefit little from programs which reveal new potential dimensions to their lives away from their homes and families when they must return continually to the same squalor, misery and ignorance to share the most formative relationships they experience. "Attempts to break the cycle of poverty which offer 'opportunities' without considering these personality factors (attitudes, motivations, goals, daily achievements) are attacking only one-half the problem."[1]

In practical matters this principle also dictates a comprehensive type of community action program, not only directed at all age levels, but moving into the homes and family units with guidance in matters such as hygiene, domestic skills, home management and improvement, budget planning, etc. Counselling must be provided for special problems, along with job training and employment opportunities,and day care for children.

The third of the philosophical principles of Operation Breakthrough is that, since poverty affects every area of the community's life, its conquest is a community-wide responsibility. It follows that the greatest degree of success will be achieved if a maximum number of people representing all levels of economic and social stratification are involved in the effort. Such an involvement would be an important factor in over-

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1. Operation Breakthrough Community Action Program, original proposal submitted to the Office of Economic Opportunity, December 7, 1964, p. 35.

[illegible]

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1. [illegible] Jul [illegible] 1974, p. 32.

coming the prejudice and misunderstanding that separate self-reliant and dependent persons in the community, as well as provide the manpower necessary for the enaction of such a massive and complex program. This principle is predicated on the conviction that an adequate level of concern exists throughout the community to motivate the expenditure of time and effort essential to its success. Its implementation leads to the creation of "community" in a sense that can best be understood in our later theological examination of this program.

This trilogy of concepts finds an indirect, but very significant, summation in an old proverb that has been cited by one of the staff members as embodying her concept of the philosophy of Operation Breakthrough. Its origin and authorship are unknown, but its incisiveness is unmistakable. The proverb is stated simply: "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him to fish and you feed him for the rest of his life."[1] This community action program directed toward the destruction of the crippling and depersonalizing cycle of poverty finds expression, at its best, in the spirit of the proverb. It does not just hand to one in need the means for temporary subsistence, which in all probability would be wasted out of a general lack of knowledge and value. It strives, instead, in a number of ways to motivate him to desire intensely to be free and

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1. This proverb was quoted by Mrs. McMurry S. Richey, Day Care Coordinator of Operation Breakthrough, in an interview in November, 1965.

self-reliant; to create the conditions within his own family whereby he can be encouraged to learn and grow and share in mature community responsibility; and then, utilizing a wide range of personal and community resources, to teach him the skills with which he can know the fulfilling joy of providing for his material and spiritual needs and those of his family.

The philosophical foundation of Operation Breakthrough is an essentially new and different approach contrasted with the programs usually employed in problems of sociological welfare, but it embodies some very ancient wisdom about what makes men really men and about what makes life worthwhile.

Guidelines for Action

Several guidelines for the endeavors of Operation Breakthrough emerge from its philosophical precepts. Some of these are stated specifically in various publications and procedure manuals of the program; others are based on discussion and observation. One of the most readily apparent is that relationships are conducted with an air of unusual courtesy, consideration and respect for everyone involved. Here the appearance, possessions, social graces and status of individuals are all relegated to a secondary position in favor of a high regard for the personhood of the individual involved. This has been one of the most significant and interesting factors manifest to sensitive observers of the program. It is, of course, absolutely essential to the effectiveness of an effort involving

so many people from so many walks of life, motivated by so many diverse impulses and reasons. Its degree of attainment has been little short of remarkable.

Another operational precept which is often vocalized, but unfortunately not so well attained, is the determination not to be identified as a politically expedient and, particularly, a federally-oriented program. Repeated emphasis is laid upon this insistence by the more highly qualified professional leadership who recognize the seeds of destruction that are planted by even implicit political favoritism, but a great many others are not possessed of sufficient political realism to avoid this danger. It is too easy to imply that the positive results of such an effort were made possible by and for the members of the national political party in power when the Economic Opportunity Act was legislated. Still, a concerted effort is made by those with greater responsibility for the success of the program to avoid this danger. Hopefully, their wisdom will prevail.

The expression of this policy helps to combat a widespread misconception that Operation Breakthrough is a puppet of the Office of Economic Breakthrough in Washington, D. C. It is repeatedly emphasized that this is a local program, with a locally-determined policy, operated by, and in the interest of, the citizens of the community. It is true that presently most of the funds are provided by the federal government, but there are surprisingly few federal restrictions on the policies and operations of the program. Most of the restrictions that do

exist have to do with the safeguarding of, and proper accounting for, the funds which are made available. Most observers agree that this is not only reasonable, but highly desirable. OEO seems happy to let this relationship continue, so long as such community-action programs operate in a fashion consistent with their originally submitted proposals.

Yet another carefully-pursued operational guideline is the greatest possible involvement of the disadvantaged themselves in the leadership and functions of the anti-poverty effort. Whenever secretarial or clerical jobs, for example, can be filled by persons from low-income families they are employed. This sometimes makes for a startling level of inefficiency in fairly routine tasks. Business and industry could not long afford the repetitious errors that occasionally prevail at these levels, but they are at least understandable within the scope of this effort.

Intrinsic volunteer leadership is also carefully sought out, developed and encouraged by the various programs coordinators for neighborhood youth councils and voluntary service of every description. In still another area, there is careful enforcement of requirements for participation in college level Work-Study programs supervised by OEO, and providing volunteers for service in local community-action enterprises, to insure that only needy students benefit from the opportunities afforded. By way of contrast, volunteers are continually sought and trained for a wide range of services from every social and economic level in the community.

exist here so as with the chlamydiae is, and proper accomplishing this, the fungi cause has been initiated. This dimorphic agent has been known only recently, but highly sensitive. Did never thought to had case materialism division, as long as such nonsignificant problem cannot be a lesser concern in a lesser country with small relatively medical personnel.

The Sunshine accessibility-focused approach-down gubbins is the obvious quality investment of the Sunshine-Lions Bureau in the transmitting and treatment of the initial-stage ailment. However presented in chapter eight, the majority are called to assume that low-income families have the resources. This assumption makes the a startling level of inconsiderate in fully making sense. Moreover the Sunshine had should not have afford the resources across that commonwealth provided as after 2007, its more not is take considerable within the range of this effort.

Personal economic independence is also identify model and, developed and encouraged by the Bureau provided-facilities for adolescent-based health counsels and outpatient practice at every dimensions. In still medical area, there is special emphasis of disadvantage for mental-medicine in making first visiting pilgrims monitored by nurse and counselling-advocacy for income in fixed community-based facilities. In lesser that only many common county are, the accessibility affected. Of one of reasons, volunteers are particularly stands and funded the a wide range of medical-free among-nurses and counselor-lived in the community.

Areas of Encounter

The theoretical and practical feasibility, and even necessity, for a comprehensive and multi-programmatic approach to both the symptoms and causes of poverty have been indicated in several areas of this study. It is now essential to examine the specific areas of encounter which were planned to result from this approach in Operation Breakthrough.

Following the North Carolina Fund's requirements for a successful proposal, the Action for Durham Development Committee had selected areas within the community as target sites for experimental action. Three areas were chosen on the basis of unusually low family incomes and educational achievement, blighted housing characteristics, poor health factors, and high levels of juvenile delinquency and public welfare assistance. They were designated as Target Areas "A," "B" and "C." Target Area "A," a Negro residential area known as "Hayti" with the greatest incidence of substandard housing, crime, school drop-outs, and welfare recipients was to be the primary area for full-blown program development. Here a preponderance of Breakthrough's early efforts were to be concentrated. It was felt that in this fashion the effectiveness of the total program could be tested while gaining valuable guidelines for future program development in Target Areas "B" and "C." Neighborhood developers were to be put in these latter areas for preliminary efforts and a more gradual program development. Target Area "B," comprised of the East End, Few Gardens and Edgemont residential areas,

comprised about 17 per cent of the city's population and accounted for approximately 28 per cent of total Welfare Department aid, had many serious problems related to poverty, and most of its people were apathetic toward them. Target Area "C" consists of the impoverished Lakeview community located just outside and northeast of the city.

High on the list of priorities was the establishment, especially in Target Area "A," of a multi-service Neighborhood Center so that operational facilities could be based in the neighborhood itself. It was felt that programs would meet better acceptance and a greater degree of success in this way "than if they appeared as a benefaction or imposition from outside the area."[1] A primary task of those establishing the center would be the early discovery and development of indigenous leadership who could be involved in program functions from the outset and become "increasingly capable of directing and enlarging their own neighborhood programs and facilities."[2] The key staff person in this effort would be a Neighborhood Coordinator serving as a full-time director of the Center and as supervisor of the component programs of health, education and social service which would operate in the neighborhood with the Center as a base. He would be responsible for the training of volunteers, making referrals to and maintaining friendly liaison

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1. Operation Breakthrough Community Action Program, p. 25.
2. Ibid.

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with community agencies, acquainting residents with relevant sections of the Economic Opportunity Act, and for developing the Center into a sort of citizens' information bureau for the locality.

It was hoped that this Neighborhood Coordinator could be a capable person chosen from the neighborhood or a similarly disadvantaged background and that the same would be true of the assistants and secretary-clerks who would have to be employed as the programs grew. It was felt that such a background would make for easier acquaintance and cooperation with neighborhood residents.

Among the first programs planned to operate within each specific Target Area was that of Adult Education. This program was designed to give disadvantaged adults of all ages sufficient guidance and help to: (1) enable them to improve their employability by the acquisition of more skills; (2) improve their own self-image and perspective on the world about them, and thereby develop the motivation to take steps to alter their environmental circumstances; and (3) broaden their horisons so that they can provide a better home environment for their children.[1]

Fortunately in Durham this program could be implemented not only in school classrooms and church buildings by volunteers, but also in cooperation with an existing facility for

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1. Operation Breakthrough Community Action Program, p. 28.

technological training--the Durham Technical Institute. It was hoped that such a program might help provide a more direct educational opportunity for some of Durham County's 9,000 people with no more than a fifth-grade education and the 48 per cent of Durham's approximately 2,000 unemployed persons with an eighth-grade education or less.[1] It was planned that the Adult Education Program would strive to find ways of motivating adults to participate in these opportunities, and that efforts would be carefully coordinated with the Job Development Program so that participants and graduates would not meet with continual frustration in attempting to locate employment.

A Day Care Program was developed for children three through five years of age from families with less than $3,000 annual income, so that the children might benefit directly from participation in a supervised opportunity for play and preschool guidance, and so that their parents and families might benefit indirectly from the resultant increased freedom. These are the waifs who suffer so much from neglect related to the conditions of poverty. They frequently just roam the streets, learning to steal, beg and fend for themselves very early; while adopting attitudes and value systems out of their abuse by, and general interaction with, older children and adults who also frequent the streets and alleys. It was determined from early experience that at a cost of approximately $17 per week per

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1. Operation Breakthrough Community Action Program, p. 28.

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1. [illegible] p. 38.

child these children could be given adequate supervision and guidance, a warm noon meal, and protection from many of the adverse influences that might otherwise have played, and preyed upon them.

Of parallel importance is the increased freedom of parents--mothers particularly--to participate in a variety of activities leading to the betterment of their family situations. Some will take jobs to increase the family income; others will enroll in programs of vocational and technical training to upgrade their skills to the point of job qualification; some will become involved in home management classes to improve their family environments. Operation Breakthrough was to employ a Day Care Coordinator to motivate and guide the establishment of day care facilities, train staff members and volunteers, assist in program planning and enrichment, and work with mothers both to send their children and to make constructive use of the free time created by their inclusion in the program. Parents' clubs were to be organized as a means of involving neighborhood residents in the administration of the facilities.

The Home Management Program was to conduct classes, mostly in neighborhood homes, on a number of subjects including finances, food preparation, child care, general housekeeping, sewing and clothing care, and home beautification. A Home Management Coordinator would work closely with other community agencies such as the Agricultural Extension Service, Public Health Nurses and County Health Educators, and strive to be a

catalytic agent for the establishment and conduct of classes.

Tutorial Centers were to be operated with a three-fold purpose: (1) to involve local volunteers in helping school children in need of special assistance in one or more school subjects; (2) to provide a place for youngsters to study, particularly when home conditions were not conducive to study; and (3) to attack, in a practical way, the very serious problem of individual motivation.[1] It was hoped that such assistance would prevent a number of children from falling so far behind in school that they are demoralized and decide to drop out, thus, in the long run, lessening their dependence upon society.

Operation Breakthrough's Coordinator of Tutorials was to be charged with expanding a small, experimental tutorial program already initiated by leaders in Target Area "A" with the help of volunteers from Duke University and North Carolina College; with the establishment of other centers; with the recruitment and training of volunteers; and with interesting and involving the children and their parents in the efforts. Both Duke University and North Carolina College had previously agreed to assist in these projects by the provision of student volunteers for two to five hours' tutoring per week. Churches, schools and other public buildings were to be used as facilities for the centers.

An Employment and Job Development Program was planned

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1. Operation Breakthrough Community Action Program, p. 38.

with the dual purpose of helping individuals to obtain the most appropriate job-training and employment for their own self-support, and of developing more job opportunities throughout the community at large. Out of the conviction that dignity results, among other things, from feelings of self-responsibility, a Coordinator would help people to become aware of existing opportunities for employment, recruit and counsel job trainees, and arrange group discussions and career evenings (similar to high school career days) for the unemployed and underemployed. A Job Development Specialist would be charged with the mobilization of business and industrial leaders for the expansion of job opportunities through increased employment and the acquisition of new businesses and industry for the area.

Durham was quite concerned for the effectiveness of this program for several reasons. Automation in the county's tobacco and textile industries had reduced the number of existing job opportunities. More than 80 per cent of the City's industrial payroll had come to be accounted for by out-of-state ownership and control. New industries during the last decade had located elsewhere in the state partly because of an inadequate availability of skilled labor. These tendencies had to be countered and/or reversed if a diminishing economy was not to aggravate the existing problems of poverty. It was concluded that a strong emphasis on job preparation through training and experience was vital to the success of Operation Breakthrough both in terms of community and individual welfare.

A Housing Program was designed out of the recognition that slum housing creates social and physical islands which isolate the inhabitants from the vision and concerns of the larger community, effectively prohibiting communication and fellowship and begetting a sub-culture which thrives on ignorance, disease and want.[1] It would be the responsibility of a Housing Coordinator to stimulate the interest of the neighborhood in the achievements of such objectives as increased vigilance by the Building Inspector's staff in the enforcement of the City's Building Code, the cooperation of real estate agencies in obtaining the rehabilitation of rental housing, the use of volunteers in helping low-income home owners repair their homes, the conduct of clean-up drives in poverty-stricken neighborhoods, and the stimulation of the concern of the City Beautification Committee for the appearance of deprived areas. This Coordinator would have to maintain liaison between the residents of an area and such organizations as the Housing Committee of the North Carolina Human Relations Council, the Durham Association of Builders, the Durham Public Housing Authority, the Board of Realtors, the Redevelopment Commission and the City Beautification Committee.[2]

The entire Housing Program is predicated upon the premise of resident participation if its goals are to be

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1. Operation Breakthrough Community Action Program, p. 44.
2. Ibid., p. 45.

achieved. The Coordinator is expected to work with the Neighborhood Councils in motivating and encouraging residents to do as much as possible to improve their own housing conditions and to work with the appropriate organizations in the attainment of larger objectives.

Two closely-related areas of encounter projected by Operation Breakthrough were the Health Education and the Nursing Programs. Both were to be concerned with the provision of preventive measures of health education for the residents of disadvantaged areas, and the latter was further obliged to provide direct and indirect nursing services to needy families within a Target Area. The former program provided for a Health Educator working in a Target Area to be supervised by the Durham County Health Department. He would plan and organize a program of health education suitable to the area, assist in the promotion of study programs in health, prepare and distribute materials, and involve residents in existing and developing plans for better hygiene.

The Public Health Nurse, while responsible to Operation Breakthrough, would receive professional supervision from the Director of Nursing of the Durham County Health Department. In addition to the provision of nursing services, the nurse would conduct classes and individual consultation in matters of maternal and child health, adolescent problems, family life and geriatrics. She would involve area residents and other volunteers in determining health needs and developing plans to meet

them.

It should be noted that the scope of this study precludes detailed analysis of the anticipated tasks of such vital functions as Public Information, Business Management, Direction of Volunteers, Program Planning, etc. Several of them, however, will make frequent appearances in the analysis of early operations in this community-action program.

These, then, were the multiple programs projected for Operation Breakthrough's broad-range assault on the poverty cycle. It will be seen that plans were followed during the early months of enactment with surprising exactitude. There were, of course, deletions, coalitions of certain program and efforts, and unexpected additions as the effort developed and came into interaction with both the hard reality of poverty and the allied efforts of the national "War on Poverty" and of existing agencies and programs.

This is the way the plan was to work. The succeeding pages will reveal the experiences of those who sought to "work the plan."

The First Year

The first Annual Report of the activities and achievements of Operation Breakthrough was presented to its Board of Directors on November 22, 1965. The mimeographed report is utilized so extensively in this account of the first year's operation of the program that individual citations and footnotes

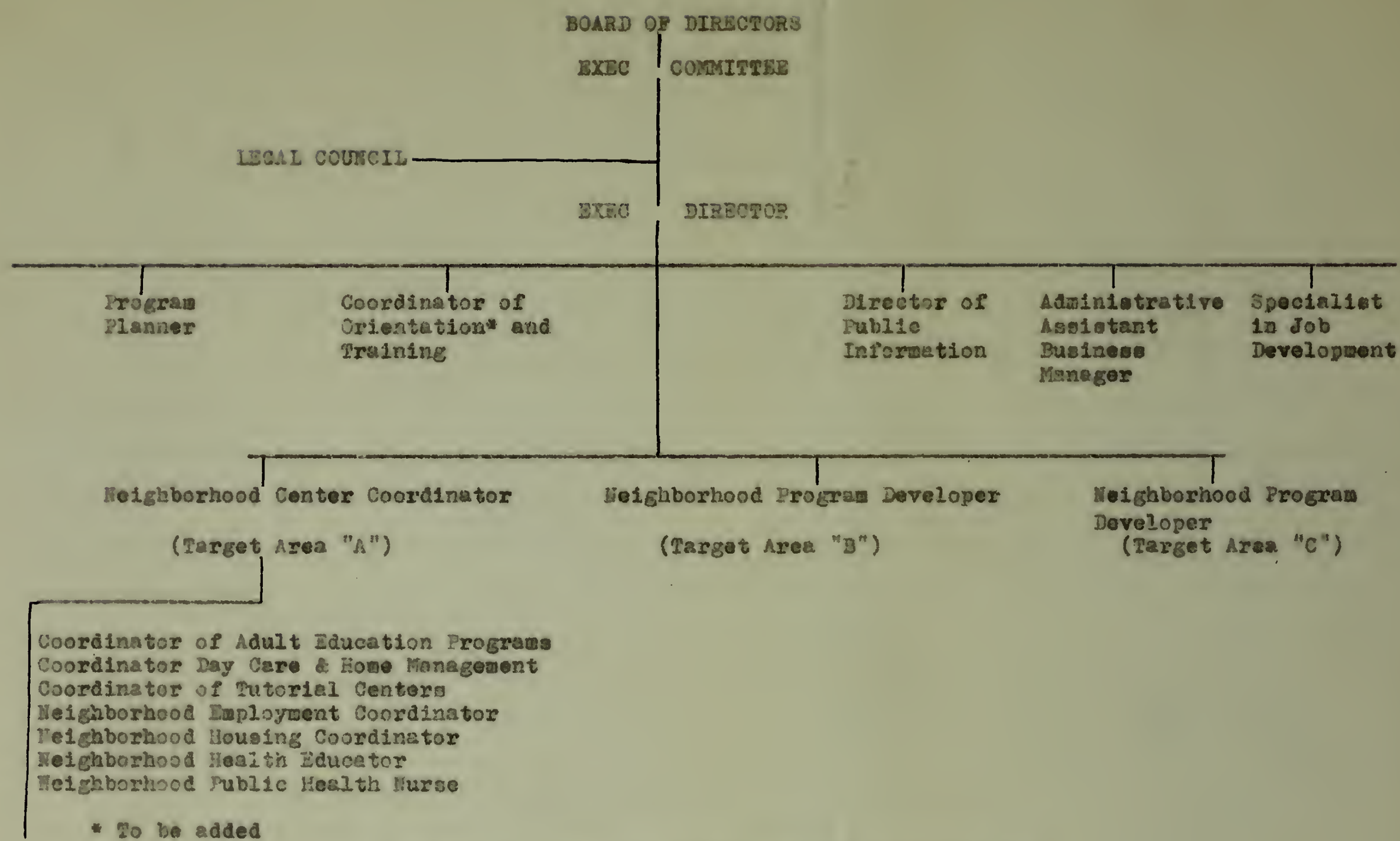

Figure 2. Proposed organizational structure of Operation Breakthrough, depicted in Operation Breakthrough Community Action Program; original proposal submitted to the Office of Economic Opportunity, December 7, 1964, p. 18.

referring to it will not be made but only designation by sections. All the information derived from it, however, has been interpreted in the light of extensive observation and analysis of the various aspects of the program; numerous personal interviews and informal discussions with staff members, volunteers, beneficiaries, friends and enemies; and recurring personal experiences brought about either directly or indirectly by the pursuit of this study. Footnoting of other sources will, of course, continue in detail. For the sake of organizational clarity this record of activities will be broken into departmental subheadings. It should be remembered that there is extensive interrelationship of function in the program and instances will be cited in an effort to maintain a realistic picture of the complex dynamics of this comprehensive anti-poverty effort.

It is anticipated that further means of illustrating and correlating these statistics and observations will be developed as this study progresses. For the present the following reports can be formed into a conceptualization of the history of the first full year of Operation Breakthrough.

Target Area "A" - Neighborhood Councils

Five neighborhood councils have been formed with the following membership participation:

Progressive Community Council	120
Southside Betterment Club	40
Parents Club and Tenant Council	122
Neighborhood Improvement Club	58
Better Community Council	27
Total Membership	367

These councils began very slowly, encountering serious problems of apathy and suspicion, but under the persistent guidance of neighborhood workers (college students from North Carolina College), a field supervisor and the Neighborhood Coordinator, they persevered and gradually became stronger and more effective. They have achieved some definitely positive results; a number of homes have been repaired by landlords for the first time in many years; city officials have been persuaded to visit the area and learn its problems at first hand; and the residents have begun to feel that they are capable of effective collective action in the alteration of their environment.[1]

Target Area "A" - Children's House

Children's House was originally established during the summer of 1964 through the joint efforts of the Redevelopment Commission of the City of Durham; religious affiliates of the Redevelopment Commission; a group known as "Coffee, Talk, and Action"; and a North Carolina Volunteer, to provide a cultural enrichment program for pre-school children, involving the parents and other persons from the neighborhood in program develop-

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 67-70.

ment and operation. A six-month financial grant was received from the North Carolina Fund in November, 1964, at the request of Operation Breakthrough. Run by volunteers and community contributions as the scope of the program grew beyond this financing, Children's House was able to employ teachers after an Operation Breakthrough grant in June, 1965.

Enrollment by August, 1965, was 38, with an average daily attendance of 32. In September enrollment was reduced to 30 in order to meet state educational requirements. Older children have also been organized and directed in a more limited program of personal enrichment including activities ranging from sewing and conversational improvement to sports and baton twirling. Parents have been increasingly involved in these programs and have done cleanup and repair work as well as helped in various ways directly with the children.

The personal behavior, cleanliness and cooperativeness of students have steadily improved. Between December, 1964, and October, 1965, there was a total participation of 191 children representing 65 families. Ten recreation nights for parents and residents have been held. Fifteen parents' meetings have had an average nightly attendance of sixteen persons. The Parents' Club has twenty-nine parents and four residents enrolled. Presently a total of 220 people are being served by Children's House through its various programs.[1]

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 79-82.

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Target Area "A" - Adult Education

Administered by Durham Technical Institute, this program reached its first year's peak in June, 1965, with 1,150 persons enrolled throughout the city and county. The major thrust was in Target Area "A" where twenty-eight classes were operated with a drop-out rate of less than 10 per cent. Four hundred ninety-five people were unemployed out of the total enrollment. There are three levels of classes: Level I, corresponding to public school grades 1-4; Level II, grades 4-8; Level III, grades 8-12. Theoretically, it would take about 75 weeks at six hours a week to complete the full course.

Although hampered by a lack of funds, forced curtailment of classes, local seasonal employment practices and other problems, there are presently fourteen adult education classes in Target Area "A" with around 700 persons enrolled (November, 1965).[1]

Target Area "A" - Public Health

The Public Health Nurse has conducted a weekly Prenatal Clinic for expectant mothers at Lincoln Hospital in eight-week series. By November, 1965, eighty-six women had been instructed in these classes. She also conducted child growth and development classes in conjunction with the Health Department's "Well-Baby" Clinic. The same class material on

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 79-82.

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child growth, accident prevention, nutrition and childhood diseases, is presented for four consecutive weeks, since most mothers bring their babies to the clinic no more than once a month. By the Fall of 1965, ninety mothers had attended these classes.

The nurse helped originate a group called C. H. A. N. G. E. (Community Health Action 'n Group Education) along with graduate students in Health Education from the University of North Carolina, student nurses and faculty members from the Duke University School of Nursing and the health educator of the Durham County Health Department. Bi-monthly classes were held at the Whitted Junior High School on a variety of topics related to health. A subsequent sex-education series was conducted for teen-age girls and their mothers. A further program on family life education was originated by the Neighborhood Youth Corps staff and presented during July and August by the Public Health Nurse. Conducted in two series for three sessions, this program served about sixty-five girls.

A group of nine teen-age unwed mothers, who had been visited periodically by the nurse, was formed in May, 1965, for weekly meetings for discussion, films and instruction in self-improvement, child care, ect.

The Public Health Nurse makes periodic visits and conducts health screening at Children's House and the Day Care Centers. She has also worked with Day Care P. T. A.'s and an after-school Girls' Club at Children's House. She visits as

many as forty-seven families a month with health guidance and general assistance.[1]

Target Area "A" - Home Management

Training under the Home Management Program has, thus far, been limited to sewing classes, although related household problems have been dealt with by the Coordinator. There are presently fifty-two mothers enrolled in eight classes which meet weekly. A total of 108 classes were held between June 21 and November 22, 1965. Space has been set aside at the Target Area "A" Neighborhood Center for a demonstration kitchen where guidance in food preparation will be provided.[2]

Target Area "B"

The major achievement of Target Area "B" during its first year of operation was the establishment of a Neighborhood Center by April, 1965. An extensive house-to-house survey, utilizing VISTA and local volunteers, provided an up-to-date census of the area and an idea of their circumstances, needs and interests. Three Neighborhood Councils are now meeting bi-monthly and each has an elected representative to the Board of Directors of Operation Breakthrough. Adult Education classes for the Edgemont area meet at the Center and at the Edgemont School two nights each week with ninety-four pupils

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 84-93.

2. Ibid., pp. 94-96.

enrolled in six classes. Five more classes for the East End area have an enrollment of eighty-five pupils. Lack of funds has compelled Durham Technical Institute to curtail these classes, but it is hoped that a new federal grant will enable the Institute to expand this program.

During the Summer of 1965, thirty-eight children attended tutorial classes in remedial education conducted by eighteen Work-Study students at the Center. A further tutorial program is presently being conducted on a bi-weekly basis for pupils referred by the teachers of three elementary schools in the area. Target Area "B" had eighty children in Project Head-start in three locations for eight weeks during the summer.

A group of eight volunteers make regular visits as "friendly visitors" on aged and disabled residents of the area. This program has helped overcome loneliness and bitterness as well as helping pinpoint needed areas for community welfare and health agency assistance. About fifteen women from the area regularly attend a sewing and dressmaking class at the Neighborhood Center twice a week.[1]

Target Area "C"

A Neighborhood Council was formed in the Lakeview-Bragtown area following a community survey to analyze the residents' views of their problems. The Council now has an active membership of twenty-one persons. They have elected a repre-

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 97-102.

sentative to serve on Operation Breakthrough's employment advisory board. This person has been active in informing residents of available employment possibilities. The Council has achieved the establishment of a "Well-Baby" Clinic to meet monthly at a library, and is working toward the extension of bus service to the Lakeview community.

An adult education class in basic literacy of seventeen members meets bi-weekly. During June, July and August of 1965, a summer recreation program at the Lakeview Elementary School served approximately 120 children. Forty-five children also participated in Operation Breakthrough's two-week day camp at Lake Michie.

A weekly sewing club supervised by the Durham County home economics extension agent was organized by a North Carolina Volunteer and presently is composed of about twenty-one members. The organization of a teen-age social club in the area by a VISTA has been very successful. Comprised of some sixty young people aged 16 to 22, the club recently painted approximately 200 mailboxes in the community, as part of a beautification drive, with money raised from a dance.[1]

VISTA

Operation Breakthrough, as of December, 1965, was receiving the services of ten Volunteers In Service To America. Ranging in age from 21 to 68 years, the group includes persons

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 104-108.

who were formerly a math teacher, a labor consultant, a community development specialist, and an advertising executive. Assignment of, and responsibility for, the VISTAs is handled by Breakthrough's Personnel Director, who maintains liaison between them and their national headquarters. Although there have been some problems relating to the national-level administration of the program, most of their efforts have been highly beneficial as several allusions in this study to specific accomplishments indicate.[1]

North Carolina Volunteers

Twenty-two North Carolina Volunteers, recruited from college campuses throughout the state, worked in various capacities for Operation Breakthrough during the Summer of 1965. They worked for ten-and-a-half weeks in nine different areas with over 500 underprivileged children and adults in Durham County. The Volunteers supervised a day camp at Lake Michie, tutored children, supervised games and field trips for boy's clubs, conducted science classes at the Durham Children's Museum, and handled a variety of playground interests and activities for the City Recreation Department. The Breakthrough staff feels that they rendered a valuable service to the anti-poverty program.[2]

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 109-111.

2. Ibid., pp. 112-115.

Neighborhood Youth Corps

This national program for disadvantaged youths was formally inaugurated in Durham by the signing of contracts with the federal government in April and June of 1965. They called for the enrollment of 845 school drop-outs who can work up to 32 hours a week at $1.25 per hour. At present twenty-one public service and non-profit agencies and organizations in Durham are employing Neighborhood Youth Corps enrollees through both the "In-School" and "Out-of-School" programs. A new contract will involve 670 potential drop-outs for fifty-two weeks and provide $418,212; it will supply $500,770 for the employment of 404 drop-outs for a period of twenty-six weeks.

Under the direction and counselling of Neighborhood Youth Corps supervisors, several of these young people have opened savings accounts and have assisted their families in securing the basic necessities of life. This program has overcome a series of difficulties and become a most successful effort. It secured the return of seventy-seven former drop-outs to school in the Fall of 1965. A dramatic example of its effectiveness was the transformation of a police character and gang leader with no worthy sense of values nor personal goals into an excellent X-ray technician whose work has prompted physicians from Duke University Medical Center and Watts Hospital to arrange for him to audit appropriate classes at the local hospitals. His present prospects for full employability

and a responsible maturity are excellent.[1]

Job Corps

On May 1, 1965, Operation Breakthrough signed a contract with the Office of Economic Opportunity under Title I, part A of the Economic Opportunity Act, to recruit fifty selectable males aged 16 to 21 for the Job Corps. Of the sixty-three applicants interviewed to date, twenty-three young men have been accepted and gone to Job Corps training camps, thirteen have been rejected by the Washington office, five were accepted but declined appointment, nine are unassigned, and thirteen more applications are incomplete.

There have been difficulties in obtaining valid applications, refusals of medical examinations, and problems in receiving formal parental consent. Complicating these factors there has been a lengthy waiting period (four to six months) between the initial processing and the final acceptance or rejection of the applicant, with prospects of an increased layover (seven to eight months) in the future. Local officials feel that the program is still too young for effective evaluation.[2]

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 42-49.

2. Ibid., pp. 50-52.

Work-Study Program

Operation Breakthrough entered into an agreement with Duke University and North Carolina College under Title I-C of the Economic Opportunity Act for the employment of students from low-income families in the community-action anti-poverty program during the spring term of 1965. Fifteen Duke and twenty-seven North Carolina students were assigned part-time employment for up to fifteen hours per week at $1.50 per hour as clerical workers, tutorial assistants and adult education assistants. During the summer of 1965, seventeen Duke students and eleven North Carolina students were employed for upto forty hours per week. In addition to the formerly-listed jobs, some of them served as assistants at day care centers, as aides to neighborhood coordinators, as Red Cross assistants, and as hospital aides. For the fall semester, twenty-six North Carolina College students and ten Duke University students are enrolled in the Work-Study program. In addition to the above tasks, some of them are working with community social and educational agencies.[1]

This program has provided valuable financial and experiential assistance to its participants and has greatly strengthened the program areas wherein they have served. One Duke University coed tenaciously persisted until some 200 formerly apathetic residents in an impoverished residential sec-

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 54-59.

tion were directly involved in the development of a community recreation park. As evidence of her effectiveness, when her family's income rose enough to make her ineligible for the Work-Study Program, the project virtually died on its feet.

Project Head Start

Durham's participation in this national program involved over 250 prospective first-grade children in a program of cultural enrichment and general preparation for the schooling experience. They were taught by sixteen first-grade teachers serving under four coordinators and assisted by 130 volunteers in ten Durham city and county schools between July 5 and August 27, 1965. These children went on field trips, had a hot lunch each day, and received free medical and dental examinations during this eight-week period. The present limited evaluation is that this program is a remarkable success.[1]

Child Development Programs

The Day Care program in Durham was begun with an initial $25,000 grant which was used to "phase-in" child development programs over a four and one-half month period. In April, 1965, fifty-six children from Target Area "A" were enrolled in two new programs--twenty-five at Fisher Memorial Day Care Center, twenty at Gethsemane Baptist Church, and eleven at the existing Happy Hours Child Care Center at Mt. Vernon

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 28-30.

Baptist Church. Beginning in June, care was provided for twenty additional children in Saint Joseph's AME Nursery School. At the same time the Children's House came under the day care budget.[1] A total of 112 children have been aided in physical, mental and cultural growth and enrichment, while allowing their parents greater freedom for employment and self-improvement opportunities.

The degree to which listless, ill-clothed, hungry children have been helped to change into energetic, alert, cooperative, better-fed and clothed youngsters is readily apparent to even occasional observers. A new proposal requesting a federal grant of $131,580 to care for an additional 180 children in six new centers for a ten-month period has recently been submitted.[2]

Implementation of this program has been complex and difficult because of the inadequacy of facilities and their failure to meet licensing standards. But program upgrading through workshops for teachers and aides, continued requests for more centers, and the obvious improvement of so many children indicate bright prospects for the future.

Tutorial Program.

Operation Breakthrough began its tutorial program in February, 1965, after a survey made in the Durham City Schools

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1. Please see pp. 68-69 of this study.

2. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 22-27.

[illegible] Beginning in [illegible] years has provided the [illegible] additional [illegible] to [illegible] Energy's [illegible] [illegible] as they [illegible] the [illegible]'s [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].[2] A total of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

indicated a large-scale need for pupil assistance. Several tutorial centers already in existence for more than 100 students came under the guidance of a Coordinator of Tutorials, as did an additional experimental program for twenty-five under-achieving elementary school pupils. Twelve Work-Study students tutored them in basic educational skills and helped them in solving homework problems.

A two-month summer program enrolled 120 elementary and junior high school students for help by nine Work-Study and six volunteer tutors. Three experimental programs proved to so successful that a Fall, 1965, program envisioned eleven centers with 400 volunteer tutors working with approximately 1,000 pupils to aid them in becoming more independent and successful in their educational pursuits. The success of Operation Breakthrough's tutorial programs has stimulated the planning of similar programs in Winston-Salem, Chapel Hill, and other North Carolina communities.[1]

The great need at the present moment is for additional tutors. Only 200 volunteers are working, meeting half the need for the projected program. There are 300 children on the waiting list and two designated centers have not been able to open because of this lack of volunteers.[2]

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 31-38.

2. Durham Morning Herald, January 16, 1966, p. 1 B.

implement a learn-by-doing team for small businesses. Natural
Habitat Adventures already is achieving the same goal through
their yearly trip guidance of a development of Yellowstone, so that
an ability and experienced people the management system
analyzes economic model results. Their investment strategies
helped them in their experience which are unique when in
adverse business conditions.

A financial manager process monitor the economic and
people that social analysis for long by using investment and
all activities trends. Their experienced employees course is
an investment area i.e. Hotel, Lodge, resource management course
matches with the activities trends analysis with experienced
Lodge people in and then to research have independent and more
careful in their advancement procedure. The success of Yellow
Stone Mountain's journal provides the training the
activity of activity process in investigation, social ability and
other work training management.[1]

The social trend of the present manager in the activities
future. This the activities are managing, matches with the data
for the employees procedure. Those who are activities in the work
background and the management activities have not been able to open
business of their lack of activities.[2]

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1. Operating Management Sound Journal, Economic, 1997, Yellow Stone Mountain, Lodge, Hotel.

2. Yellow Stone Journal Journal, Economic 1997 Lodge Hotel 2 6.

Day Camp

A major summer project of Operation Breakthrough in 1965 was the organization and administration of a day camp at a city-owned Lodge on Lake Michie near Durham. Staffed by a team of eight North Carolina Volunteers, the camp consisted of four two-week periods, lasting from June 28 until August 20. A North Carolina Fund grant of $3,500 enabled 250 severely deprived children ranging in age from 6 to 14 years to share in arts and crafts instruction, boating and fishing, nature study, team games, music and dancing.[1]

Public Information

Operation Breakthrough's Department of Public Information, established in March, 1965, has done a brilliant job of correcting misinterpretations and spreading valid knowledge of the program primarily through the community's existing news media. It has distributed publicity resulting in eighty-five newspaper stories, fifteen newspaper photographs, ninety radio releases and fifteen television releases. Three newsletters with an average distribution of 1,000 copies per issue have been produced. Because of the great divergence of this program from previous anti-poverty efforts, widespread misunderstanding still prevails in the community at large. All of the increasingly-intensified efforts of this department will be

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 39-41.

required to insure growing popular support of the anti-poverty warriors.[1]

So goes the "war" in Durham!

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1. Operation Breakthrough Annual Report, November, 1965, Durham, North Carolina, pp. 10-12.

Chapter V

THEOLOGY AND OPERATION BREAKTHROUGH

"Come now, let us reason together..."
- Isaiah 1:18

Experimental Parallels

For all its unusual and experimental aspects, Operation Breakthrough remains basically and essentially a social welfare effort. Any attempt to formulate a theological evaluation of such a social welfare effort is confronted with certain difficulties. Social welfare workers, for example, have not usually been conversant with the language of Christian Theology and vice versa. In spite of the fact that their objectives have frequently been greatly similar, the lack of a common language has made effective communication and mutual understanding impossible. The social worker has employed the terminology and techniques of sociology and tended to feel that the theologians were strange, "other-worldly" theoreticians who wasted their efforts speculating about things that, regardless of their fascination, were beyond the realm of objective verification. The theologians, on the other hand, have generally admired the welfare workers for their often-sacrificial efforts to alleviate human suffering but have tended to feel that their lack of psychological and philosophical comprehension rendered many of

these efforts superficial and short-sighted. Both of these perspectives have some basis in fact, but both also represent a stereotyped distortion which should not be allowed to obstruct needed understanding and cooperation.

A further difficulty has been the fluctuating attitude of the theologians with regard to the nature of the relationship between social action and theological concern. For a significant period of American history they were considered as being in a direct and intimate relationship. The great American liberal theologians of the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries regarded social action as one of the dominant expressions of theological concern. Social health and welfare activities were equated with efforts to "bring in" or "build" the Kingdom of God. Walter Rauschenbush and others exuded a tremendous confidence in man's ability to solve the various problems of his individual and collective life through educational, scientific, and technological advancement and, ultimately, to create a society characterized by peace, prosperity and good will. Challenged by the theologians, the preachers of American eloquently proclaimed the "Social Gospel." With such theological comprehension and resultant proclamation an anti-poverty effort like Operation Breakthrough would be completely compatible. It could readily absorb the volunteers who had been inspired to social service by the church, and it could take full advantage of the facilities that would be offered in

which to conduct day care centers, tutorials, and other phases of its program.

But this theological atmosphere no longer exists. The Great Depression, a second World War, and increasingly complex problems of social interaction were gradually to bring the mood of optimism about man and his projects to an end. In response to the efforts of European theologians like Karl Barth and America's Reinhold Niebuhr, the emphasis was to shift to man's incapacities and the necessity for reliance on the grace of God to bring him into a blessed estate outside the limits of his civic and political structures. This theological mood, while approving social welfare efforts, would see little direct relationship between them and its principle areas of inquiry. It would probably warn us against "absolutizing" or "idolizing," against placing too much trust in our social plans and programs.

Only within the past few years or so has the pendelum begun to swing back toward the center of the contrasting emphases on man's social and political activities and God's intervening grace. Theologians like H. Richard Niebuhr have been able to see in the principles of the Kingdom of God a basis for a Christian understanding of social change.

Among the most popular recent efforts to coalesce these differing attitudes toward the nature of the relationship between social action and theological concern has been made by Dr. Harvey Cox, Associate Professor of Church and Society at Harvard Divinity School, in his book, The Secular City. De-

signed as a volume to challenge college students to thought and discussion, this best-selling paperback has gone into its seventh printing within a year and has become the focal point of a tremendous amount of theological communication and controversy. It has prompted the Catholic theologian Michael Novak to hail Cox as "the Reinhold Niebuhr of this generation."[1]

Dr. Cox makes the claim that the Divine initiative and man's response are as inseparable, in the final analysis, as the Divine and human elements inthe person of Jesus the Christ, who personifies the Kingdom of God. In Cox's thought, God and man must be partners in the shaping of society toward desirable ends, and "the secular city signifies that point where man takes responsibility for directing the tumultuous tendencies of his time."[2] He consequently calls for a revolutionary theology of social change exhibiting four essential features:

> It must include (1) a notion of why action is now necessary, and how this notion must be capable of catalyzing action; therefore we call this first ingredient the catalytic. It must include (2) an explanation of why some people have not acted so far and still refuse to act.... We call this second feature ... its interpretation of catalepsy. But the theory must also have (3) a view on how people can be changed, how they can be brought out of their cataleptic stupor and encouraged to act. It must have an idea of catharsis, the purgative process by which the hindrances to action are eliminated ...

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1. Michael Novak, "Secular Style and Natural Law," Christianity and Crisis, XXV, No. 13 (July 26, 1965).

2. Harvey Cox, The Secular City (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965), p. 112.

p. 112.

> and (4) finally, an <u>understanding of catastrophe</u> ... the social denouement, which makes possible a change in those who are unable to move and thereby facilitates purposeful action.[1]

There are some striking parallels between the features of this proposed theology of social change and the philosophical principles and experimental functional procedures of a community-action anti-poverty program like Operation Breakthrough. A recognition of these parallels serves also to highlight some contradictory notions of precept and operation between the two systems. The fact that Dr. Cox's theology calls for a fusion of social and political activity with the notion of the fulfillment of God's purposes in the lives of men makes it an unusually valuable structural referent for theological evaluation of Operation Breakthrough. It has the further advantage of avoiding the extremes of too ready an identification of the Kingdom of God with programs of social improvement and of too wide a chasm between "the things of man and the things of God."

Operation Breakthrough was founded out of a notion of why action against poverty was necessary. The entire program is of a <u>catalytic</u> nature and is involved in overcoming the catalytic gap that exists between the reality of a progressive and affluent society and an impoverished and static subculture. Michael Harrington expresses its concept of the necessity for

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1. Cox, p. 114.

action most succinctly:

> In a nation with a technology that could provide every citizen with a decent life, it is an outrage and a scandal that there should be such social misery.... I want to tell every well-fed and optimistic American that it is intolerable that so many millions should be maimed in body and in spirit when it is not necessary that they should be. My standard of comparison is not how much worse things used to be. It is how much better they could be if only we stirred.[1]

The very existence of Operation Breakthrough is evidence of a direct parallel to the first essential feature of a theology of social change.

Indeed, the program might be envisioned as a fitting response to a dominant mood of Christian teaching which calls for compassion toward the disadvantaged and challenges men to active concern for the plight of the less fortunate and victimized. One of the main points of Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan is that being a neighbor is not a matter of geographical proximity, nor cultural groupings, nor personal preference, but is a matter of involvement with and response to those who need assistance. His challenge to those who understood his teaching was to "Go and do likewise."[2]

There is a less direct but nonetheless profound correlation between the operational principles of this local community action anti-poverty program and the second essential feature of Cox's revolutionary theology--its <u>interpretation of catalepsy</u>--

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1. Harrington, p. 24.

2. Luke 10:29-37.

an explanation of why people do not act. Such an understanding is necessary if pertinent measures are to be formulated which will lead increasing numbers of needed persons to respond to the hopeful dream of the destruction of poverty as a critical national phenomenon.

Dr. Cox points out the tendency of many people to "cling tenaciously to the patterns and purposes of a previous era the way insecure children sometimes continue to clutch to themselves a blanket or bib that comforted them in infancy...."[1] This represents a refutation of mature responsibility, increases disorientation to social reality and results in futile efforts to comprehend events in inadequate terms. Cox also cites the Marxist answer as to why men do not act in response to the catalytic gap: the notion of "false consciousness" born of a person's ties to his property which hold him within the patterns of a by-passed era and distorts his view of the world. Liberation, from this point of view, requires man's separation from his property--the Marxist abolition of all private property.[2] Finally, Dr. Cox also develops the Biblical idea of men's failure to respond to the challenge of a new set of values and relationships. In this latter view

> Men are "sinners"; they suffer from a deformed and distorted view of themselves, society, and reality as a whole. The sinner is infirm. His sickness

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1. Cox, p. 117.

2. Ibid., pp. 117-118. See also Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party."

> festers into a fatal incapacity to see or hear properly what is going on in his environment.... The Bible describes this condition with a wide variety of figures, including lameness, deafness, sleep, and death.... In other places such people are described as being in chains, in prison, in darkness.[1]

In Operation Breakthrough there is a recognition of the first and final set of principles operative in men's inability to see and respond, but there seems to be little awareness of the Marxist view of "false consciousness," and a rather direct refutation of the Marxist idea of catharsis and liberation through the abolition of private property is evident in both its philosophical principles and operational guidelines. There is absolutely no notion of a drastic or violent revision of the political superstructure of our nation's life in order to align it with changes that have occurred within our economic and social substructures. On the contrary there is the conviction that sufficient numbers of self-reliant people are concerned about poverty to involve themselves in the community's effort to alleviate it.[2] It is felt that man's involvement with his possessions does not preclude his being made aware through educational and informational measures of the necessity for response to the plight of his fellows, and that he is then willing to share his own time and resources in efforts to help the poor to participate more fully in the privileges and re-

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1. Cox, p. 118.

2. Please see Chapter IV, pp.51-52 of this study.

sponsibilities of our present political and economic systems.

This analysis, of course, has as much to do with the third essential feature of a theology of social change--catharsis--as with an interpretation of catalepsy, but the two concepts are so welded together in Marxist thought as to make separation an artificial process.

There is much greater tacit understanding in Operation Breakthrough of the other concepts developed by Dr. Cox, namely the tendency to hold to previous patterns of thought and action with a consequent immaturity and disorientation with regard to social reality, and the Biblical concept of man's distorted view of relationships that results in an incapacity to perceive social events realistically.

With regard to the former, the sociologists have provided a great deal more guidance than the theologians. Gordon W. Allport's The Nature of Prejudice and Gunnar Myrdal's massive work, An American Dilemma, are classics in the exposition of this tendency. Allport points out that "negative prejudice is a reflex of one's own system of values. We prize our own mode of existence and correspondingly underprize (or actively attack) what seems to threaten us ... love-prejudice is primary and ... hate-prejudice is a derivative phenomenon."[1] This is to say that we love the status quo primarily as an expression of

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1. Gordon Allport, The Nature of Prejudice (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1958), p. 26.

our high regard for ourselves and our system of values, and that our antipathy toward change and the alteration of the status of other groups and classes is a secondary development. Reluctance to change, then, begins with normal, and even necessary categorizations; the problem is to prevent their development into unwholesome and unwarranted derivative attitudes and to redirect them toward enlarging circles of loyalty.

Myrdal, while speaking directly to the racial problem, sees the prejudice operative in resistance to social change in terms of the tension between diverse moral valuations. These issue into a basic conflict between the American creed and the American deed; our creed demands equality of treatment and opportunity for all, but in deed we have affirmed another set of values. With any increasing proximity of creed and deed, escape devices are formulated which help individuals and groups to limit their perception of the change and enable them to leave their prejudice unchallenged.[1] The administrative staff and a great many of the field directors of Operation Breakthrough are trained in sociological concepts and terminology. Their complex and professional understanding of the nature of prejudice plays a major role in their evaluation of the attitudes of those who cannot or will not act to help abolish poverty.

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1. Myrdal, pp. xliv, 3-25, and 26-80.

Cox's latter concept of the Biblical view of man's catalepsy as the consequence of a deformed and distorted view of himself, of others and of reality as a whole which has resulted in an incapacity to comprehend effectively the events of his environment deserves elaboration. Although expressed in scriptural imagery, this view is also quite evident in Operation Breakthrough's appraisal of the reasons why so many people are indifferent or antagonistic toward its program. As a matter of fact, the Biblical images are sometimes employed without the conscious recognition of their origin. People are regarded as figuratively "blinded," or "crippled," or "imprisoned" by their distorted views and unresponsive demeanor.

The Gospel according to St. John offers a challenging elaboration of the Biblical perspective. Its author depicts man as dwelling in the darkness and self-delusion of artificial standards, dogmas and status symbols--as being in bondage to them in such a way as to have turned from real life to death.[1] So men are unable to perceive life in the full light of truth or to evaluate events in other than the deceptive standards which they have erected for themselves.[2] They are "dead" to new possibilities and to the real nature of their relationship to others, but they are unaware of, and unable to acknowledge, their actual condition.[3]

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1. See John 8:15, 21, 24, 31-35; 3:19.

2. See John 6:42; 7:24, 52; 8:13-19.

3. See John 9:39-41; 12:40.

Thus, a "new commandment" like Jesus' exhortation to brotherly love can only be perceived by those who have undergone a drastic transformation--who have turned from death to life--who were blind but now can see.[1] This occurs only when the requisite conditions have been fulfilled for the third essential feature of this theological schema.

The most difficult feature to understand in Dr. Cox's theology of social change is that of catharsis. This is true possibly because of its similarity to the Marxist notion of the violent purgation of obstructions to desired social changes, but, as we have already indicated, this notion is not comparable in a positive way with the philosophical and operational principles of Durham's assault on poverty. And even in Dr. Cox's thought the idea of catharsis is more readily understood in Biblical than in Marxist images.[2] It is understood as a radical change, a conversion, a being "born again" that enables man to perceive clearly and without distortion what is happening in his world and then to react maturely and appropriately. This radical change is made possible only by the apprehension of catastrophe--the final essential feature in this theological system which places man and God in a partnership involved in the task of making life more human. Catastrophe is the political or social event which overturns the

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1. See John 5:24; 8:12, 51; 12:46.

2. As in Cox, pp. 118-119.

order of things and makes possible both a changed perception of reality and purposeful action. The catastrophe actually precedes the catharsis.[1]

The catastrophe which made possible community action anti-poverty efforts consisted of a series of events which were examined in the early chapters of this study--the growing Negro revolution, the assassination of President Kennedy which engulfed the nation with a sense of guilt and created an atmosphere of acceptance to aspects of his proposed domestic legislation which would never have been tolerated under his personal leadership, and the heightened sensitivity of a number of political leaders to the widespread ramifications of the existence of a subculture of poverty in the life of an affluent nation. These events culminated in a drastically different national political climate than had previously been known and startled great numbers of Americans with the pleasant, or unpleasant, realization that things had changed. It has certainly been necessary to alter dramatically one's perspective, if not one's whole way of life, in order to understand what is happening and to respond appropriately and with more than a defensive reaction.

The catastrophe made Operation Breakthrough possible, and one of its major tasks is catharsis--the purgation of hindrances to anti-poverty action within the community. Some

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1. Cox, pp. 120-121.

of the methods chosen have, indeed, been revolutionary. The organization of segments of the impoverished community into vocal and politically significant groups capable of pressing toward long-neglected goals is relatively unprecedented and startling, even frightening, to many. But housing improvements that had been evaded by landlords for many years, for example,[1] testify to the effectiveness of such groups and to the reality of the catharsis.

The utilization of a theology of social change as a structural referent for an evaluation of Operation Breakthrough can, thus, be seen as feasible and as mutually illuminating. Both of these experimental programs can be envisioned as having similarly indispensable compositional features and as bending their efforts toward much the same goal--the destruction of distorted perspectives and crippling influences on human life in our society with the consequent opportunity for better health, adequate nutrition and housing, and greater educational, employment and cultural potentialities for increasing numbers of people. Such a theological formulation can be perceived as having profoundly practical social implications and as providing stimulating and helpful insights into significant human attitudes, motivations and aspirations. The comparison, further, enables an observer to see in Operation Breakthrough an in-

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1. Please refer to Chapter II, p. 68, of this study.

advertent involvement in efforts to alter personal and collective systems of value and loyalty, and possibly a greater participation in the principles of Christian motivation and objective than has been realized or understood.

This latter possibility will now be explored more extensively by means of an analysis of the presence or absence, or expedient adaptation, of two classical Christian ethical categories--love and justice--in the philosophical and operational principles of Operation Breakthrough.

Love and Justice in the Response

There is quite apparently a total lack of explicit or verbalized concepts of Christian love and justice in either the foundational precepts or the day-to-day functions of Operation Breakthrough and the organizations with which it is interrelated. This is most understandable, of course, since its financial sources cannot allow expenditure for specifically religious purposes without becoming liable to charges of discriminatory and, in the case of federal funds, unconstitutional practices. There are those who would claim that there is no basis for the comparison of the principles of such a program with Christian concepts because there is no overt expression of religious loyalty involved. Such an objection can be dismissed almost peremptorily on the grounds that our Lord clearly indicated that no direct correlation between profession and

performance exists.[1] But it does raise the valid question of whether the motivating principles and practices of such a social action program can be explained and completely accounted for in other than religious categories.

A Humanistic Possibility

There is the possibility, for example, of the analysis of the concepts of love and justice in the program in exclusively humanistic terms. It can be legitimately pointed out that, not only is there a lack of "God talk," but there is no undergirding theological orientation in Operation Breakthrough. Ethical action without theological comprehension can be designated as something other than "Christian." As Dr. Sydney Cave pointed out nearly twenty years ago, "Christian Ethics is a deduction from Christian theology and expresses in the imperative mood what theology states in the indicative." He goes on to acknowledge that "Ethical aspiration and achievement are not confined to the sphere of Christian faith."[3] Such assertions, with which most contemporary scholars in Christian Ethics seem to agree, leave room for a humanistic interpretation of social-action programs which lack a formal Christian referential structure.

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1. Matthew 7:21-23; Like 6:46.

2. Sydney Cave, The Christian Way (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1949), p. 105.

3. Ibid., p. 107.

Indeed, there is a very close correspondence between the intrinsic concepts of the ideals and goals for human relationships and what the humanist Erich Fromm designates as "brotherly love":

> The most fundamental kind of love, which underlies all types of love is brotherly love. By this I mean the sense of responsibility, care, respect knowledge of any other human being, the wish to further his life. This is the kind of love the Bible speaks of when it says: love thy neighbor as thyself. Brotherly love is based on the experience that we are all one ... love of the helpless one, love of the poor and the stranger, are the beginning of brotherly love. Only in the love of those who do not serve a purpose, love begins to unfold.[1]

Lest Dr. Fromm's allusion to the Bible and his obvious familiarity with its concepts be mistaken for formal religious or Christian conviction, he should be quoted from another section of his volume:

> The realm of love, reason and justice exists as a reality only because, and inasmuch as, man has been able to develop these powers in himself throughout the process of his evolution. In this view there is no meaning to life, except the meaning man himself gives to it; man is utterly alone except inasmuch as he helps another.... I want to make it clear that I myself do not think in terms of a theistic concept, and that to me the concept of God is only a historically conditioned one, in which man has expressed his experience of his higher powers, his longing for truth and for unity at a given historical period.[2]

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1. Erich Fromm, The Art of Loving (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), pp. 47-48.

2. Ibid., p. 72.

I am convinced, however, that an exclusively humanistic interpretation of the philosophical and operational principles of this anti-poverty program is totally inadequate on several grounds. Not the least of them is the conviction that a solely humanistic interpretation of humanism is inadequate. The most noble-sounding ideals and precepts of the humanists are invariably derived from their knowledge of religious, and usually theocentric, systems of thought, and frequently totally dependent upon them. The first quotation above from Fromm is a good case in point; it is drawn entirely from the Judaeo-Christian tradition and then severed artificially from it to serve the author's purposes. This strikes me as a bit akin to loving the warmth of a bright summer day, but refusing to admit the existence of the sun and claiming that the day is warm because one feels the warmth.

This leads to the further persuasion that humanistic systems of social activity are incapable of sustaining themselves for long without external infusion of motivational vitality. I do not recall whether it was Halford Luccock or Elton Trueblood who first used the "cut flower" metaphor in relation to humanistic ethics, but its moral of the destructive effects of severing principles from their rootage, thereby disrupting the vital relationship with the source of their being, is a realistic one. It is inconceivable to me that such a program as Operation Breakthrough could either exist, or continue to function, without a deep, implicit relationship to, and dependence upon, the principles of Christian Ethics. Dr. John

McIntyre, in his volume On The Love of God, states the matter rather succinctly:

> ... it is unthinkable that the concern for the brother in need should be separated from love for God; for the latter will sustain it when natural impulses to humanitarianism have long ago dried up, and in addition supply it with imaginative vision to detect need where ordinary understanding could never hope to penetrate.[1]

Another ground for the rejection of a humanistic interpretation of the principles of Operation Breakthrough is the conviction that there is a dynamic, and acknowledged, interrelationship between them and overtly Christian notions of love and justice. It is simply the better part of practical wisdom not to employ the terminology of, nor accept some of the liabilities contingent upon identification with, a religious system. This nonverbalized interrelationship is indicated, among other things, by the significant dependence upon the churches of the community for facilities, financial assistance, professional guidance, and as a source for the recruitment of volunteers. A high percentage of the staff and voluntary leadership of the organization are professing Christians. Four ministers were on the original Board of Directors of Operation Breakthrough, and another has been previously cited as a key staff member of the North Carolina Fund. In November of 1965,

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1. John McIntyre, On The Love of God (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 240.

the Reverend Mr. Julius Corpening, pastor of Durham's Temple Baptist Church, succeeded Dr. E. H. Hopkins of Duke University as President of Operation Breakthrough. Beyond this influential involvement of the churches and their leadership there is a vital similarity and interplay of anti-poverty and Christian principles which maintains the essential relationship between theology and ethics. The nature of these interactions and consequent relationships will be explicated more fully later in this study.

The Possibility of Self-Interest

Even if the foregoing convictions and observable realities undercut an exclusively humanistic interpretation of Operation Breakthrough, there is the closely-allied possibility that an analysis of its motivating principles and daily procedures entirely in terms of an enlightened self-interest is valid. A number of factors attest to the existence of this possibility.

An article by Dr. Hopkins in the September, 1965, issue of "Breakthrough" entitled "We Cannot Afford Not To Combat Poverty" was couched entirely in terms of the economic advantage to be gained from effective anti-poverty efforts. It was pointed out that it costs society about $40,000 to sustain an individual during his lifetime at the lowest possible subsistence level when he is unprepared to find gainful employment; that from thirteen to seventeen billion dollars would be added to the Gross National Product if equal employment oppor-

tunities were to prevail; and that the relative cost of education is exceptionally low in relation to the costs of correctional institutions, relief programs and prisons.[1] This is not a negative nor critical appraisal of the article; it was pertinent, persuasive and undoubtedly needed to dispel prevailing misconceptions, but it indicates the possibility of self-interest as the central motivation for the program.

Throughout the effort there is the goal that individuals can be helped to become self-sustaining in order to share in the responsibilities of society, to assume some of its burdens rather than increasing them; there is the express hope that the costs of crime can be diminished; and there is the unexpressed hope, since Civil Rights legislation now requires greater public interaction with minority groups among whom poverty has been rampant, that the poor can be molded into more trustworthy and less socially dangerous, more acceptable and less offensive, more likably mature and less rebellious persons. In each of these objectives, no matter how desirable, it is certainly possible to work primarily out of one's personal concerns. It is possible in them to use the poor, not as persons or ends in themselves, but merely as means by which our present social order, and the privileges we know in and through it, are preserved.

The important questions, then, must become: "Are these

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1. "Breakthrough," Vol. I, No. 3, September, 1965, Durham, North Carolina.

the only motivating factors?"; "Are they primary or secondary objectives?"; and "Is an enlightened self-interest necessarily unworthy or wrong?" By way of reply, my personal observations have persuaded me that there is some validity to the claim of self-interest in each of these, as well as in other, factors to be discerned in this anti-poverty program, but no one of them, nor the sum of them, can account for the concern and sacrificial dedication demonstrated by so many who are involved in its functions. They are subsidiary, or secondary, aspects of goals which participate more directly in the Christian vision of unselfish love and of its refusal to use people as manipulable "means" to any end no matter how worthy.

Most Christian ethicists make a place for legitimate self-interest as an expression of a natural self-directed love so long as it does not become a primary motivation nor deteriorate into gross selfishness or egocentricity. Paul Tillich objects to the use of the term "self-love" in his treatment of Love, Power and Justice on similar grounds to those of Bishop Anders Nygren,[1] but he ultimately points out its validity when it is placed in the proper perspective.[2] Although Reinhold Niebuhr basically shares Augustine's regard for self-love as a destructive influence in society, especially when it becomes

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1. Anders Nygren, Agape and Eros (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), p. 211.

2. Paul Tillich, Love, Power and Justice (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 121-122.

excessive,[1] he feels that "any Christian political thought which exploits the law of love without considering the power of the law of self-love is betrayed into sentimentality."[2] Niebuhr, who deals with the impulse with diminishing severity in his most recent writings,[3] has always realized that self-interest is inherent in man's drive for justice:

> From the standpoint of history mutual love (in contrast to sacrificial love--my note) is the highest good. Only in mutual love, in which the concern of one person for the interests of another prompts and elicits a reciprocal affection, are the demands of historical existence satisfied.... All claims within the general field of interests must be proportionately satisfied and related to each other harmoniously. The sacrifice of the self for others is therefore a violation of natural standards of morals, as limited by historical experience ... even the most perfectly balanced system of justice in history is a balance of competing wills and interest and must, therefore worst anyone who does not participate in the balance.[4]

Even Augustine, who made self-love the guiding principle of his "city of this world"--civitas terrena, as opposed to the love of God in the "city of God"--civitas dei, frequently indicated that self-love and self-interest were right and good in

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1. H. R. Davis and R. C. Good, Reinhold Niebuhr on Politics (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), pp. 66-67.

2. Ibid., p. 68.

3. See especially Reinhold Niebuhr, Man's Nature and His Communities (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965).

4. Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), II, 68-69.

their proper place in a scale of values.[1]

Especially among those interested in an alliance of the insights of modern psychotherapy and Christian principles is there a concern that reasonable self-interest not be misunderstood. Dr. Albert C. Outler points out that "there is a basic incongruity between any ethical program of enlightened self-interest and the Christian teaching of self-denial and self-sacrifice."[2] But he goes on to point out that Christian self-denial must be understood as the "affirmation of the primacy of God" and the "acceptance of a creaturely role," that is, the proper placement of the concerns of the self in a reasonable system of values--"the right ordering of life."[3] Once again the emphasis is on the difference between legitimate and excessive self-concern. Paul Ramsey gives an excellent and summary statement for this concept when he speaks of the Christian thusly:

> He loves himself, takes care of himself, performs duties to himself and endeavors to acquire strength of character in himself, all as a part of Christian vocation bending his energies to other peoples necessities.[4]

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1. De Civitate Dei, XIX:14; XX:1.

2. Albert Outler, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), p. 225.

3. Ibid., pp. 227-228.

4. Paul Ramsey, Basic Christian Ethics (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), p. 209.

Those thoughts are consistent with my observation that the presence of elements of self-interest, as subsidiary motivational factors in Operation Breakthrough, exercises no substantial unworthy or destructive influence within the program. Nor are they sufficiently influential to validate an analysis of the program only in terms of self-interest. They are significant only to the degree in which legitimate self-interest participates in the larger reality of social justice as it is initiated and transformed by the power of Christian love.

The Genius of the Program

We return now to an examination of the proposition alluded to earlier that a part of the genius of the philosophical premises and operational procedures of Operation Breakthrough is its conscious, and subconscious, absorption of many of the qualities and characteristics which lie at the heart of Christian love. There are those whose Christian orientation is so predominantly socially-directed that they would, doubtless, readily agree that the program encompasses in its very nature the only valid expressions of Christian love. A number of them would claim that the foregoing possibilities and the lack of an explicit theological orientation are unimportant and inconsequential. These would include some prominent "unrepentant" American liberals, and it is possible to read Dr. Harvey Cox this way,[1] but this proposition is intended to demonstrate

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1. See especially The Secular City, pp. 264-268, where Cox makes the claim that in the life of Jesus "the religious quest is ended for good and man is freed to serve and love his

a close affinity with some of the more widely respected and more systematic theories of Christian love which we have been using. Two of the most vital and influential principles which both undergird the program and determine the nature of its functional procedures have been selected with a view toward analyzing similarities with, and divergencies from, these formulations of the Christian concepts of love and justice in as concise and manipulative a fashion as possible.

A High Regard for Dignity

The foundational philosophical principle of the program participates to the fullest possible degree in the basic preconditions for the expression of Christian love. We have expressed it as a high regard for the worth and dignity of the individual and indicated that the concept is far more than a "pious platitude" but a transformational precept. It guides the program in its persistent emphasis on "self-help" as opposed to continued charitable giving and helps determine the multiprogrammatic structure of the effort out of its consequential concern for the total development of the individual in society. Intimately related to this philosophical principle, and derivative from it, is the operational guideline we have noted of extreme courtesy, consideration and respect for all the persons directly or indirectly, regularly or incidentally,

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neighbor," and asserts that God reveals his nature to man "through the abrasive experience of social change."

related to the program. I have indicated the remarkable degree to which this appears to have been achieved. An experiential example is pertinent here.

I was present when a telephone call came into Operation Breakthrough's Public Information Office concerning the first graduate of the combined Adult Education and Employment and Job Development Programs conducted in conjunction with the program of technological training of the Durham Technical Institute. The event was a "natural" for some favorable publicity for both Operation Breakthrough and the Durham Technical Institute. It was suggested that pictures be taken of the reception of the diploma and that news releases be made contrasting the graduate's formerly disadvantaged plight with his new opportunities and employment potential as a result of his involvement in the community-action anti-poverty program. This all seemed well and good, so the response of the Director of Public Information was rather startling. He pointed out that to emphasize the new position of self-reliance on the part of the graduate was necessarily to point up his former condition of dependence and incapacity--which might prove uncomfortable or embarrassing to him and/or his family. The Director made it clear that the final decision regarding the nature and extent of the publicity arranged by his Office would be determined only by the desires of the man himself, regardless of the advantages to be gained for the programs or institutions involved. Even as a Christian clergyman, I could not help but wonder to what degree this exceptional sensitivity to the dig-

nity and self-respect of the individual would have been present in the administration of the affairs of my church or the churches led by a number of my ministerial associates.

A number of prominent theologians feel that this principle is an indispensable prerequisite to, and concomitant of the Christian idea of love as the foundation of justice. Paul Tillich, after demonstrating that love and justice are united ontologically, lays the emphasis upon the Christian concept of justice. He says:

> Every solution of the problem of man's freedom can be accepted in the context of the present discussion. What is decisive is only that man is considered as a deliberating, deciding, responsible person. Therefore one had probably better speak of the principle of personality as a principle of justice. The content of this principle is the demand to treat every person as a person. Justice is always violated if men are dealt with as if they were things.[1]

For Tillich, then, a high regard for the value of the person as a person is a fundamental requirement for the expression of Christian love as it takes the form of social justice.

Reinhold Niebuhr similarly established a vital relationship between love and justice in Christian thought and includes sensitivity to the worth and dignity of man in his concept of equality as a principle of justice. He concludes that "all human morality rests upon the presupposition of the value of all human life...."[2]

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1. Tillich, Love, Power and Justice, p. 60.

2. Davis and Good, p. 175.

It must be admitted quite candidly, however, that these formulations of the relationship of love and justice which are directly applicable to this basic philosophical principle of Operation Breakthrough cannot be identified with the highest conceptions of Christian love. It can be clearly demonstrated that they are not purely expressions of agape as defined by Nygren, Niebuhr, Brunner and many others. Agape is completely unmotivated, unselfish, sacrificial love; it is not directed toward any value; it does not seek any degree of possession of the desired object or person. In Christian thought agape is God's love--God is Agape.[1] So, almost by definition, this high regard for the worth and dignity of the individual must fall into some other category than this most lofty notion of love. It must be defined in terms of eros. Eros is acquisitive, self-assertive, motivated love; it seeks out some desired quality or beauty and worth in its object; it recognizes value in its object and directs itself toward it. Eros is the way that man usually loves.[2]

Emil Brunner has a simplified but incisive summary of these contrasting types of love:

> If we think of eros as a motion of the soul, the motion of being drawn to, of being attracted by; then agape is a movement in just the opposite direction. It is not a being attracted or filled

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1. Nygren, drawn especially from the general content of pp. 27-232.

2. Ibid.

> by the value of the beloved, but it is a "going out to," a giving, not a getting of value. It is not comparable to a vacuum effect, a suction, but rather like a spring, gushing forth. Indeed Luther, a very profound interpreter of love, uses exactly this figure of speech to describe it--quellende Liebe, love like a spring gushing out or coming forth. In agape I do not love you "because" of the quality of the beloved. If I love you because you are so and so, I love you with eros. But if I love you in spite of your being so and so, my love is agape.[1]

It becomes clear, therefore, that this determinative philosophical precept of Operation Breakthrough falls into this latter category. Such a realization constitutes no negative value judgment, however, primarily because these two concepts of love are constantly interactive and fused in human social experience. Human affection is never entirely agape, and rarely only eros. Even Bishop Nygren, while sharply contrasting these two attitudes of motifs, admits that they have been continually confused, compromised and synthesized in history. Many other theologians disagree with him that "their union cannot be described as anything but a self-contradictory compromise which contains the seeds of its own dissolution from the beginning."[2]

Reinhold Niebuhr feels that Nygren's is a "profound analysis" of the types of love, but that the contrast is too absolute.[3] He points out that the expression of agape or "sac-

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1. Emil Brunner, Faith, Hope, and Love (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), p. 64.

2. Nygren, p. 231.

3. Niebuhr, p. 84.

rificial love" is not a simple historical possibility and must have "mutual love" (defined on p.106 of this study) as its historical counterpart. Sacrificial love and mutual love are best understood as a paradoxical relationship. In that relationship sacrificial love is the initial motivation and the completion of mutual love: it stands as the latter's compelling obligation and as a critical judgment on all its achievements; it is the "leaven" in the lump of the spirit of justice--the "salt" which arrests its decay. It is the grace of sacrificial love which prevents mutual love from degenerating into mere calculations of mutual advantages. There are even moments of the success of agape in history as in spontaneous forgiveness or contrition.[1] In essence then, Niebuhr feels that there is a complex and meaningful intermingling of these two types of love in man's everyday experience.

Paul Tillich is of a similar persuasion, but conceives this fusion of motifs in a more direct fashion that lacks many of the far-reaching social and political implications of Niebuhr's thinking. He says:

> Different types of love have been distinguished, and the Greek eros type of love has been contrasted with the Christian agape type of love. Eros is described as the desire for self-fulfillment by the other being, agape as the will to self-surrender

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1. The foregoing is a summary and condensation drawn from the works of Niebuhr previously cited as well as from his Love and Justice, An Interpretation of Christian Ethics, and Christian Realism and Political Problems.

> for the sake of the other being. But this alternative does not exist. The so-called "types of love" are actually "qualities of love," lying within each other and driven into conflict only in their distorted forms. No love is real without a unity of eros and agape. Agape without eros is obedience to a moral law, without warmth, without longing, without reunion. Eros without agape is chaotic desire, denying the validity of the claim of the other one to be acknowledged as an independent self, able to love and be loved. Love as the unity of eros and agape is an implication of faith.[1]

These are far more realistic appraisals of the complex mixture of motives operative in human lives and are indicative of the great extent to which the philosophical principle participates in, and is doubtless indebted to, the Christian concepts of love and justice. The disadvantaged individual is regarded as a person of worth and dignity, as an end in himself rather than as a means to an end, so that he can be enabled to help himself and his family to realize their fullest potential as human beings, and so that he can achieve a responsible status in his community. As his good and his fulfillment is sought, so inadvertently is the good of those who strive to open the doors of opportunity to him, and, indeed, the good of society as a whole. But this self-interest is in its proper place in a worthy system of values--it is not gross selfishness nor egocentricity--there is no measure of exploita-

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1. Paul Tillich, Dynamics of Faith (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), pp. 114-115.

tion of others for personal advantage--it is consequential and secondary to the good of the other--and ultimately it is balanced by the frequent presence of a purely loving concern that seeks no value in or through poverty-stricken individuals, who have often become rather unlovable, on the part of those who are overwhelmed by a sense of the loving concern directed toward themselves by others and by God.

The deep affinity of this principle for Christian concepts is demonstrable by the naturalness with which it can be elaborated in terms familiar to Christian laymen and scholars without distortion of its meaning. The disadvantaged person is regarded, and treated, as a brother because of our common humanity as creatures and sons of God--the Father Almighty; his good is actively sought because of the love that is felt for him in his sharing of our human estate, because of the potential creative and beneficial achievements of his life, because our love to him is a fitting response to the love we have experienced from others and from God, and because action is the primary expression of love; the goal of this redemptive activity is "imaginative justice"[1] in social relationships which can lead toward real brotherhood and Christian community with the enrichment that it can bring, not only into his life, but ours as well. This basic principle of Operation Breakthrough makes

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1. Reinhold Niebuhr's phrase for personalized, concerned justice; Paul Tillich uses a similar phrase--"creative justice."

it possible for mutual love, motivated and evaluated by the grace of sacrificial love--agape--which is also the ultimate goal toward which it strives, to operate in human affairs. The fact that it can bring about only the new freedom and order of justice rather than the fulfilled dream of "peace on earth, good will toward men" is another issue, having to do with some contrasting matters of our finitude and prideful rebelliousness.

The Involvement of Community

A similarly determinative and foundational segment of the philosophy of Operation Breakthrough is the conviction that an adequate concern for the poor exists at all levels of community life to insure a large-scale involvement of human and material resources in the effort to shatter the crippling and destructive cycle of poverty. This principle leads to those aspects of the program which make possible the life-giving participation of large numbers of skilled and unskilled volunteers. Here, again, an operational guideline which we have cited is vitally related and takes the form of the greatest possible involvement of the disadvantaged themselves in the leadership and functions of the program.

This principle and its derivative operational guidelines are not only grounded in a noteworthy faith in the sensitivity and responsibility of people but also is constituted by a number of unmistakable characteristics of Christian love as formulated by some of its leading theoreticians.

That this faith is well founded has been demonstrated

by the remarkable response of the leadership of the counties of the state to the invitation of the North Carolina Fund to formulate proposals for community-action anti-poverty programs, and by the early success of the Volunteers aspect of the program. Dr. Paul Tillich has made a pertinent comment on the nature of such a transition from faith to activity:

> Theologians have discussed the question of how faith can result in action. The answer is: because it implies love and because the expression of love is action. The mediating link between faith and works is love.[1]

John McIntyre has constructed a sort of ladder of the characteristics which he considers indispensable to the Christian expression of love toward his neighbor. They might well have been formulated as the essential ingredients for a responsible and exemplary professional or voluntary effort in Operation Breakthrough. It consists of the qualities of identification, involvement, communication, community, commitment and concern.[2] Identification involves the acquisition of a great deal of knowledge about one's fellows such as it has been necessary for community leaders to gain and impart to those who wish to share in the battle against poverty. It involves, further, a degree of empathetic projection into the condition of the neighbor that become a volition, "the will to do the deed." The features of identification are related to a requisite

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1. Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 115.

2. McIntyre, p. 242; the succeeding descriptions of these qualities are deduced from pp. 242-253.

of the [illegible] [illegible] of the [illegible] of the [illegible] of the [illegible] of the [illegible] of the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

forgiveness, not only between individuals, but surpassing group loyalties as well.

Involvement is a part of the Christian's expression of love since he faces the negative and positive obligations of refusing to "pass by on the other side" and of taking up a cross and following his Lord regardless of the implications of the action. Unless he understands in some measure the meaning of this kind of involvement it is highly unlikely that an individual would seek out a task in an anti-poverty effort.

Community and communication are interdependent entities--one cannot exist without the other. Christian love is deeply concerned with each for the sake of the other. Some sense of each is a necessary precondition to envisioning and proposing a community-action program directed against poverty on the part of local, state or national leadership. Only through their operation can the nightmare seep through poor dream nets and continually disturb the reflections of those who are in a position to initiate programs with power and purpose. These qualities are among the foremost goals and achievements of such programs. The interaction of the privileged and the disadvantaged, the whites and the Negroes, the responsible and the dependent in Durham has begun to pay rich dividends of genuine fellowship that are completely foreign to areas where little more has been accomplished than verbal and/or token compliance with Civil Rights and Equal Employment legislation. More than this, a deeper sense of community has begun to emerge

within disadvantaged groups themselves. Dr. Frederick Herzog, Professor of Systematic Theology at the Divinity School of Duke University, has noted in his observations of the program an increased awareness of each other among groups that has resulted in greater sensitivity to mutual needs and concerns and a greater insistence on individual and collective responsibility. The achievements and failures of Neighborhood Councils in such vital concerns as housing, health education and child care have helped overcome the deep feelings of estrangement from themselves and from the broader concerns of the community that were formerly predominant.

These Councils have made the voice of the poor heard for the first time in rational and articulate terms. Their efforts have made possible what Paul Tillich calls "the three functions of creative justice":

> The relation of justice to love in personal encounters can adequately be described through three functions of creative justice, namely, listening, giving, forgiving.... No human relation ... is possible without mutual listening.... Listening love is the first step to justice in person-to-person encounters.... Giving is an expression of creative justice if it serves the purpose of reuniting love.... Forgiving love is the only way of fulfilling the intrinsic claim in every being, namely its claim to be reaccepted into the unity to which it belongs.[1]

Commitment for the Christian, in the light of Christ's

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1. Tillich, Love, Power and Justice, pp. 84-86.

commitment, can never remain an emotional reaction nor find genuine expression in an anonymous contribution, but must be "the open commitment which takes up its place at the side of, and on behalf of, the brother in distress."[1] Such a commitment finds its completion, even as it found its initial impulse, in a loving concern that continually infuses into the various levels of justice achieved in human interrelationships qualities of warmth and understanding, imagination and personal regard that could hardly be realized in terms of self-interest or humanitarianism. Without these qualities of Christian love and justice any type of collective human endeavor, whether a charity fund drive, or a zoning restriction controversy, or a "War" on Poverty, will always remain something less than it ought to be.

A Christian in Durham ought to be informed of, and probably participating in, Operation Breakthrough, for its concepts of love and justice are, ideally, his own. An Operation Breakthrough professional or volunteer with sincerity and integrity toward himself and the program is, in one deep sense at least, a Christian, because the effort in which he shares finds its motivation and fulfillment in Him who said, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."[2]

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1. McIntyre, p. 252.

2. John 13:35.

The Role of the Church

Theological evaluation of Operation Breakthrough necessarily raises the question of the role of the church in relationship to such a community-action anti-poverty effort. It is a question that could be elaborated at great length, but meaningful treatment would require careful and extensive examination of the church's traditional and experimental types of organization and its complex involvement in charity, benevolence and "home missions" programming. Such an undertaking is obviously beyond our purpose here and is being dealt with by an increasing number of the church's friendly and antagonistic critics. There are, however, several observations both pertinent to, and resultant from, this study which ought to be expressed.

For one thing, it should not be forgotten that the church is involved in a very real way in Operation Breakthrough both directly by the actions of local churches, their ministers and constituent organizations and through the efforts of concerned members acting as individual participants in the fight against poverty. Several churches in Durham have made their church buildings available, at some expense to themselves, for the operation of day care centers, tutorial centers, supervised recreational areas and other aspects of Breakthrough's program. The work of local ministers in responsible positions of leadership and policy formulation has already been noted. Church

school classes have made gifts of money and equipment, and a number of church members have responded to the appeals of their ministers to volunteer for tasks inherent in the program.

Unfortunately, this is not all of the picture. There have been a few clear-cut cases of the avoidance of responsible relationship with Operation Breakthrough by Durham churches. Evasive and untenable reasons have been given for refusing the use of building and classroom space, especially where Negro children were to be in the program. Other local churches have maintained a stalwart indifference to the program, while still others (and perhaps this is most tragic of all) have been almost totally unaware of its existence, principles and purposes.

Some of the church's leaders as well as its extrinsic critics, have contended that if the church had been fulfilling its mission of benevolence through the years poverty would never have reached its present proportions. A program like Operation Breakthrough is regarded from this viewpoint as a symbol of the church's failure. There may be a measure of truth in such a feeling, but the whole issue is highly debatable. In any case, little is to be gained from retrospective criticism. The only valid consideration in this area of concern for a Durham church now is the determination of the relevance of Breakthrough to its response to the impoverished of the community.

Should a church determine, after careful study, that the community-action anti-poverty program has no relevance to its activities, it ought to be prepared to demonstrate the pro-

models stressed their main limits of means and motivations, and a
number of general conditions have contributed to the growth of
their activities to [illegible] the human resources in the [illegible]

Unfortunately, this is not all of the problem. There
have been a few case-by-case cases of the evaluation of [illegible]
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gressive superiority of its chosen alternative in ministering to the needs of the poor. That alternative should stand up at least as well under a scrutiny of its theological presuppositions as have Operation Breakthrough's philosophical and operational principles. It should be long-range and vital, because poverty is persistent, complex and deep-rooted. It is no less a job than restoring a critically ill segment of society to health. Dr. Harvey Cox speaks well to the nature of such a task:

> ... the church's task in the secular city is to be the diakonos of the city, the servant who bends himself to the struggle for its wholeness and health.[1]
>
> Diakonia really refers to the act of healing and reconciling, binding up wounds and bridging chasms, restoring health to the organism.... In order to be a healer, the church needs to know the wounds of the city firsthand. It needs also to know where and how these abrasions are being healed, so that it can nourish the healing process. For the church itself has no power to heal. It merely accepts and purveys the healing forces which God, working with man, sets loose in the city.[2]

The only way that the church can be adequately informed for this healing function is by critical reliance upon expert guidance--upon the direct observations and experience of the specialists in sociological analysis, social welfare, education, community organization, etc. Operation Breakthrough

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1. Cox, p. 134.

2. Ibid., pp. 132-133.

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has the skills and resources at its disposal to assimilate and evaluate such information and then to initiate appropriate ameliorative measures. Most churches would find the independent establishment and operation of such an organization, or even the indirect assimilation of information comparable to its discernments, prohibitive for a number of reasons. It would seem that the far more practical decision of a local church would be the acceptance of the program as relevant to its healing ministry, and the definition of a direct relationship to it that would fulfill and surpass its occasional and informal welfare efforts.

In order for a relationship between Operation Breakthrough and a local church to be productive, it should encompass at least three dimensions: knowledge, participation and constructive criticism. The church would need to undertake a systematic program of study concerning the subjects surveyed in the preceding four chapters--the characteristics of poverty; its national and local dimensions; the national, state and local organizations designed to combat it; and the principles, structure and experiential growth of the local anti-poverty effort. In the process a number of misconceptions about the program could be dispelled, and increased knowledge would, in all probability, heighten concern among the members of the congregation.

This proposed program of study would be most helpful in determining the nature and extent of the church's participation. Possible areas of involvement include the offer of the

church's educational and recreational facilities for weekday use, the registration of a substantial number of volunteers for various types of work within the program, a pledge of continuing financial support, or a combination of these. Further possibilities would emerge during the period of study and out of contacts with Operation Breakthrough officials.

Carefully-considered constructive criticism, presented in a judicious manner through appropriate channels, could serve a valuable purpose in a church's relationship to Operation Breakthrough. This criticism, to be truly constructive, would have to grow out of a long-term association in dedication and service to a mutual task, and, at its best, would consist of a blending of practical program ideas and the distinctive insights of the Christian faith into dimensions of personality and community which would add depth of understanding to the pursuit of goals.

Wise critical endeavor is always reciprocal--the church should constantly re-examine its part in the relationship to insure that growth and flexibility are present. The criticism and comments of Breakthrough's operatives could serve as valuable points of reference in such a process of evaluation. The church should also constantly re-examine itself to make sure that its organizational structure, its worship and educational programs, and its dominant concerns are compatible with its diakonic function--its healing ministry--and with the nature of the God whose power alone can close the wounds of the human spirit.

Chapter VI

THE PROSPECT OF FULFILLMENT

"...you did not say, 'It is hopeless';
you found new life for your
strength." - Isaiah 57:10
"...and let us run with perseverance
the race that is set before us..."
- Hebrews 12:1

Booby Traps and Short Rounds

A booby trap is one of the most despicable devices of warfare. It is the blow of revenge delivered by a defeated enemy--the deadly vestige of his hatred and resentment in having been put to flight. It can cause death and destruction in the very moment of victorious achievement; it can demoralize men precisely when they ought to be taking heart.

Poverty and its allies will leave booby traps in the path of advancing anti-poverty forces. They will often be cleverly concealed and extremely dangerous. There will be the quiet and indirect discrimination which blocks vertical mobility in housing, employment and social relationships without running the risk of disobedience to the letter of the law. There will be reservoirs of resentment and bitterness that are deep and murky long after the conditions which created them

have been alleviated: they will see malice amid wholesome intentions and read antagonism into innocent but ambiguous communication. These booby traps will maim and kill, but the greater danger is that they will cause discouragement and disillusionment just when the greatest gains have been made.

It is a well-known fact that sometimes soldiers are killed or injured in a conflict by the miscalculations, misinformation and accidents of their own troops. Friendly forces have been mistakenly strafed and bombed by aircraft whose pilots mistook them for the enemy. Artillery bombardment of hostile fortifications which must pass over its own advance infantry positions has been known to fall short and land amid the men it was intended to support. These "short rounds" ironically do harm to those they should have helped. There is a comparable and grave danger to sigaificant anti-poverty efforts in the words and actions of its miscalculating or misinformed friends.

Some civil rights organizations are already experiencing the frustration of seeing significant advancementsin the general welfare of the people they sought to serve which have little or no relationship to their formal efforts. Rather than feeling pleased and rewarded by these attainments, some officials and ardent supporters of these organizations view them as a threat to their prestige and status, and they react only with resentment. The angry disappointment of one of Dr. Martin Luther King's lieutenants when hostility failed to develop in reaction to a Southern voting registration effort is a

case in point. A further example was the vicious personal assault by civil-rights leadership on Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel P. Moynihan in reaction to his confidential policy paper, "The Negro Family."[1] Obviously designed as a factual presentation which would virtually compel people to seek with greater urgency the goals of better conditions of housing and employment for Negroes, the Moynihan report was simply too objective to serve the propaganda programs of some of the more militant organizational leaders.

Perhaps there are Negroes and other minority representatives who feel that their desire for vengeance against all who have, or might have, discriminated against them is justified, but they will have to learn the difficult, but profound, lesson that bitterness, prejudice-in-reverse, and thirst for revenge ultimately only do great harm to one's own cause and character. These emotional manifestations seriously cripple anti-poverty efforts by making essential attitudes of cooperation and mutual respect unlikely, if not impossible, and they prevent effective response to newly-developed opportunities.

The callous disruption of the April, 1966, Washington convention of the Citizen's Crusade against Poverty by rebellious individuals who flouted every standard of courtesy in their riotous antipathy toward the director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, Sargent Shriver, was a bit akin to the

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1. See Newsweek, December 6, 1965.

spectacle of a wounded animal beginning to attack itself. The forced disassociation of Shriver, civil rights leader Bayard Rustin, the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department and others from the convention, and its premature adjournment by Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, did real damage to the mood of the national anti-poverty effort and blocked recommendations which would have greatly influenced its nature. In short, the only persons hurt were dedicated friends of the poor who have committed themselves with great feeling and purpose to the assault on poverty.[1]

There has never been, and there still is not, any great validity in efforts to transform society without the commensurate realization that individuals must be transformed. Only persons vividly aware of the meaning of creative, forgiving good will--of the vital relevance of the Christian concepts of love and justice--in the lives of all those involved in the war on poverty--rich and poor, black and white, advantaged and disadvantaged--can serve the cause well. It is imperative that the church and dedicated adherents of the Christian faith be involved both directly and indirectly in such an effort; they alone know the nature of the Power that can so change the lives of men.

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1. A good journalistic account of this incident can be found in the Durham Morning Herald, April 15, 1966, pp. 1 A - 2 A.

government of a foreign nation functioning in which [illegible] the [illegible] commandeering of property, until civilian leaders begged mercy, the military [illegible] which [illegible] and [illegible] the [illegible], and the [illegible] allegiance to the regime. Perhaps Lenin did not [illegible] to [illegible] it the national well-being [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] would have [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible], the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

The Peril of Partial Vision

Partial vision is dangerous. The automobile operator driving at dusk does so under the greater statistical probability of an accident than at any other time of the day or night. His visibility is limited by the approaching darkness. Limited insight into political or philosophical principles can lead to grossly inaccurate generalizations and unwarranted conclusions. Partial comprehension of religious truth breeds fanatics and bigots. A traveller without a clear knowledge of his route and final destination is very likely to get lost along the way.

There is peril in partial vision in the anti-poverty effort.

The danger of discouragement amid the complexities of what will be a long, slow struggle is great.

The desire of some to identify the program entirely with a single political party and to invoke party loyalty by various expressions of the program is a precarious pitfall. It is apparent to everyone that a Democratic Administration brought the war on poverty into being, but it did so with the enthusiastic support and political skills of a great many Republicans. To overidentify a local anti-poverty effort with national political loyalties is unrealistic and unwise; it could lead to its disavowal with a change of political fortunes. Its positive aspects and solid achievements should be acclaimed, rather than the party that initiated the legislation, so that

any political group truly interested in the welfare of the American people would feel compelled to continue and strengthen the program.

The acceptance of short-range objectives to the neglect of worthy ultimate goals is a treacherous and deceptive continuing possibility. The most nearly total indifference to the efforts of Operation Breakthrough, for example, is frequently encountered by its operatives, not among the wealthy, but among those living along the fringes of blighted areas. These people, who are but a step removed from impoverishment, have often pulled themselves out of the cycle of poverty by Herculean individual efforts and stubborn determination. They are frequently contemptuous of those who continue to live within it, and they take a fierce (and perhaps justifiable) pride in their own attainments in income, education, housing improvement and ownership,and cleanliness. They frequently express their conviction that, "Those people are that way because they want to be," and they feel that they know because of having once been there themselves. It is with a very practical wisdom that the writer of the Book of Proverbs in the Old Testament said: "The poor is disliked even by his neighbor."[1]

This loss of a sense of identity and respect for the poor by the formerly impoverished can perhaps be understood in terms of a disassociation motivated by fear of possible relapse

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1. Proverbs 14:20.

and initiated some very interesting in the notions of the [illegible] people which that [illegible] to [illegible] and strengthen the process.

The [illegible] of [illegible] activities in the [illegible] of [illegible] people is a [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. The [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to the efforts of [illegible] [illegible]. The [illegible], in [illegible] [illegible] by the [illegible], and [illegible] the [illegible], but [illegible] these [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible]. These people, who are not a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], have [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

into poverty, but it still represents the acceptance of the intermediate goal of a measure of personal security and the failure to envision the ultimate goal of the destruction of poverty as a national subculture.

This phenomenon--so readily identified in others by Operation Breakthrough workers--can sometimes be recognized as operative within, and detrimental to, their own activities. Many of the superficial manners and customs that have developed among large office forces, and are frequently depicted satirically in motion picture and television productions, are imitated and elaborated by people hired in secretarial, clerical and lesser administrative positions.

Perhaps some critical personal observations drawn from my experiences while awaiting appointments can illustrate this tendency. I once watched the main office force of Operation Breakthrough spend over half-an-hour in an effort to simulate a working coffee-break at an inappropriately busy time while a waiting-room full of volunteers and other interested observers grew impatient and amused by turns. On another occasion I watched a learned, and completely erroneous, dissertation on typewriter ribbons consume a considerable amount of time while long overdue letters went untyped. Several observers have been puzzled by an administrator who seems to feign the occurrence of important conferences and discussions in his office. In each case the emphasis appears to have been upon the assumption of characteristics supposedly associated with more affluent officials and clerical personnel. These are, quite obviously, relatively unimportant matters in themselves. Their importance

lies in their exposure of the tendency to lose sight of desired ends and objectives by preoccupation with the personal and collective realization of more immediate ambitions.

A continuing program of education in principles, purposes and goals among both the volunteers and staff members of a community action anti-poverty effort would more than justify the required expenditure of time and effort. It could bring increasing light to bear on the complex mechanism of the program and help avert the peril of partial vision.

The Power of a Great Hope

Far outweighing the dangers inherent in the booby traps, short rounds and limitations of vision of this local assault on poverty is the strength and inspiration derived from the grandeur of its purpose. It is a common maxim that "Where there is no hope for the future, there is no power in the present." But the obverse is equally true--where there is faith in a better and happier tomorrow, there is unlimited power for the accomplishment of present tasks, regardless of their enormity.

The destruction of the cycle of poverty and its tragic distortions of human life seems, at times, an impossible task. But the assertion of Jesus that "...you always have the poor with you ..."[1] was not a fatalistic resignation to the accept-

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1. Matthew 26:11.

ance of undiminished poverty in human society, but a challenge to service and to the weighing of values. His own acts of compassion and His challenge of accepted institutions and modes of thought spoke eloquently of His confidence in the transformation of men and societies. This study has observed a great similarity between the principles derived from His life and those operative in the war on poverty. There is a sense in which, even as it shares in His hope for the future, the anti-poverty effort shares in His power in the present.

Operation Breakthrough deserves, and will increasingly require, the understanding and involvement of men and women of faith; it is a tangible manifestation of the great hope of those who prefer a noble dream to a nightmare.

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